

J A Q U E L I N A

OF

HAINAULT:

AN HISTORICAL NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES,

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "THE DUKE OF CLARENCE."

VOL. II.

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LAURENCE

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J A Q U E L I N A

OF

HAINAULT.

CHAP. I.

AN uneasy sensation filled the mind of the duke. Though he beheld the completion of his wishes, yet his thoughts were with the stranger, who, wrapped carefully in a large cloak, had too effectually concealed his person for it to be again recognized.

As to the princess, she had been so absorbed in the contemplation of her unhappy fate, that she scarcely noticed a circumstance which had excited general attention, but saw herself become the wife of Brabant with that degree of calm despair, which,

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deaden-

deadening the sense for the moment, blunts the edge of misery.

The ceremony being over, they quitted the chapel in formal pomp, and the wretched Jaquelina had to receive the congratulations of a numerous court.

Scarcely able to support herself, she entreats permission to retire, that she may hide from each observing eye the sorrow that swelled her heart: when Brabant, giving a reluctant consent, she hurried to her apartment; which as she is entering, her woman puts into her trembling hand a note. The princess gazed with astonishment on the writing, and, before reflection could occur, she had broken the seal, and with impatient haste read what follows:

To the Princess of Hainault.

“ If Gloucester, the once esteemed friend of Jaquelina, is not too far condemned to hope for pardon, deign but to delay the dreaded sacrifice till you have vouchsafed to hear a vindication of his conduct.

“ Great

“Great God! and can Jaquelina have consented to become the wife of Brabant? Is her happiness to pay the debt of his trifling services?”

“Ah! why—why was it not permitted me to fly to your relief? Why did the duty I owed my country, while at the moment you were environed with danger, require my presence to destroy my every hope of happiness? Ah! believe me, thy image never was for one moment effaced from the heart of Gloucester:—No! till now it was the charm that sweetened every care. Oh my Jaquelina! with all the fervency of prayer, I beseech thee delay the fatal ceremony. In pity to that wretched being whom you once swore never to forget, grant me but one interview—one little hour is all I ask, before you resolve to be the wife of Brabant. Think, ere you determine on the misery which awaits you—Think of uniting that heart whose artless purity claims kindred with those of angels to a soul like his! No congenial senti-

ments, no reciprocal affection to attach you!—Your life to pass a dreary void, or the yet more terrific prospect of being exposed to the relentless cruelties of a jealous tyrant! And ah! if self-commiseration will not move you, remember that, in giving yourself to Brabant, you consign to everlasting misery the wretched

“GLOUCESTER!”

What bitter agonies possessed the heart of Jaquelina on reading these lines!—to find, and find too late, that still she was beloved by Gloucester.

Her mind began to wander; her senses were disordered; and, in the maze of passion and of thought, she lost the consciousness of what she was. The letter dropped from her hand, and she remained for many moments insensible of her misery. Upon recovering, she perceived the duke was in the room, and, with an air of gloomy dissatisfaction, was gazing intently on her. This sight instantly restored her recollection,

tion, and in haste she snatched up the fatal epistle.—“ You seem unwell, madam !” cried the duke with a constrained air :—“ Some unpleasing news has caused this indisposition.” The princess, overwhelmed with confusion, wanted courage to reply. “ I have stolen unhappily on your privacy !” proceeded Brabant, the colour flushing on his cheek—“ I see my presence is unwelcome !”—“ It is true, my lord !” replied the princess sighing—“ I had hoped to have dedicated a few moments to the contemplation of those important duties I have now taken upon myself, and could have wished to have been spared this interruption.”—“ I will no longer, madam, intrude on those moments so *properly* bestowed !” cried Brabant, regarding the princess with an air of incredulity, and bowing as he retired.

From the duke's manner a suspicion infused itself into the mind of Jaquelina, that he had taken advantage of her situation, and had seen the contents of a letter

so fatal to her peace. This thought added to her misery, and with severity she condemned her imprudence in having perused lines so improper to have met the eye of Brabant's wife.

A strong sense of duty made her instantly destroy the letter, and, as she made this sacrifice, she felt the first peaceful sensation she had experienced since she had given her hand to Brabant. The orders the princess had given the night previous to her nuptials had prevented her receiving the letter at the time intended by Gloucester, who growing distracted at finding no answer, returned in the agonies of his soul, and formed the rash determination of being a witness of that fatal ceremony which was to deprive him of every hope.

A few hours only detained him in Hainault after a fight so destructive to his peace, and he quitted it accusing with bitterness the supposed inconstancy of Jacqueline. This latter circumstance was unknown to the princess, who continued in
hourly

hourly dread of the farther importunities of the distracted Gloucester.

The brother of Brabant, James count of St. Pol, a weak, vain, and frivolous man, having attended the nuptials of the duke and Jaquelina, became, or affected to become, deeply enamoured of the lady Blanch, and soon after made her serious proposals of marriage.

Cured of her passion for Gloucester, and not disliking the person of the count, this lady readily listened to proposals for a union which would afford her the means of more fatally revenging herself on her hapless rival; and a short time only elapsed before she became countess of St. Pol. Ambition had some share in inducing her to wed the count, as she considered, that, should Brabant die without an heir, the sovereignty of that dukedom would devolve to St. Pol.

To render this probable, it was necessary to separate the duke and duchess: and could she, by the fall of Jaquelina, mount

the throne of Brabant, what a glorious revenge would she have!

Building all her hopes of success on observing the extreme jealousy of the duke, she had not been many days countess of St. Pol before she had formed a plan for their disunion.

She endeavoured, by the most artful conduct, to persuade the duke, that though devoted to his interests, real affection alone for her cousin prompted her to be watchful of her conduct; insinuating, that experience of some youthful imprudencies had shewn her the necessity of being particularly observant. But the duke, who was himself an adept in dissimulation, easily discovered that jealousy was partly the motive which actuated her zeal. However, satisfied with having obtained a watchful guardian of his honour in the person of Blanch, he dissimulated the real contempt he felt for the mean employment she had undertaken, and with thankfulness accepted her offer.

Since the fatal circumstance which attended

tended the marriage ceremony, a heavy gloom had taken possession of the duke's countenance; and the princess, with that deep anguish which attends an ingenuous mind on being suspected, saw herself become the unhappy object of injurious doubt. Her most innocent actions were misinterpreted, and his searching eye seemed to penetrate the very inmost recesses of her soul.

Among the few pleasures which Jaqueline yet retained a relish for, was that of music; but the full diapason, which raises the soul to heaven, was not so much sought by her, as the soft tones drawn from a simple instrument, or the inimitable melody of the human voice. These infused a healing balm into her deeply wounded mind, whilst the other gave a sensation too pure, too ecstatic in its nature for humanity to retain when the loud strain expires. The duke of Gloucester, a thorough proficient in music, had taken great pleasure in having Edwy early instructed in this delightful science; and the ready genius he evinced for it fully

repaid the duke for the pains he had bestowed.

This talent of her page often highly gratified the princess, who would listen for hours enchanted with the melodious sounds he would breath forth.

A few national airs which Edwy, who was a young enthusiast, would give with all the feeling which the memory of his country inspired, particularly delighted her; and, lost amid the pleasing sensations these would convey to her soul, she suspected not that their being English was, with her, their greatest charm. This pleasure, however innocent, afforded a subject for the invidious countess, who frequently sought occasion to remark, before the duke, the passion Jaquelina had for English music, till his rising colour shewed her cruel insinuations had taken the wished effect.

One day, the duke being present, she entreated the princess to allow her page to give her some of those airs which seemed to afford her such delight. Without suspecting her
motive,

motive, the princess immediately consented; and sending for Edwy, commanded him to play some of her most favourite pieces. Unfortunately he selected one most affectingly descriptive of the charms of his country; when, overcome with a subject so dear to him, tears burst from his eyes, and his voice too much partook of his emotion to allow him to proceed. The princess, charmed with his sensibility, caught the tender sentiment, and with moistened eye arose and walked towards the window, when, on turning towards the duke, unconscious of having given offence, how was she surprised to see the most frightful expression of rage depicted on his countenance!

Immediately the innocent Edwy was ordered with angry violence from the room; and the duke, darting a furious look at the princess, demands from her his instant dismissal. Without attempting to expostulate, she promised obedience; and the next day the youth was sent from the palace.

CHAP. II.

IN the midst of the rejoicings for the celebration of the nuptials, Brabant proposed visiting his dominions. Jaquelina, willing to quit scenes which would, in spite of every effort, still recall the remembrance of an object whom now it was again a crime to love, with pleasure acceded to the proposal, and preparations were accordingly made for their entry into Brabant.

From what cause it cannot be assigned, the duke had conceived an aversion to the lady Ulrica, and peremptorily forbade the princess taking her with her.

This injunction was bitter to the feelings of Jaquelina, and she remonstrated in pathetic terms on the cruelty of forbidding her the society of her earliest friend. The duke was angry—"If other society than that of your husband, madam, is so necessary," cried Brabant, darting at her a
look

look of high displeasure, "you will have that of the countess of St. Pol."

"The countess of St. Pol, my lord!" returned the princess with concern.—"Yes, madam, she will accompany you: she also is your earliest friend, and of years more suitable to yours than the lady Ulrica."

"Alas!" replied the princess grieved beyond measure, "the society of Blanch will ill supply the loss of my Ulrica's!"—"I understand you, madam—the lady Blanch is often too obtrusive!"—"What means your highness?" cried Jaquelina deeply blushing.—"Oh, nothing more," said the duke with a determined air, "than that it is my express command you take not with you that kind, that sympathising friend, the lady Ulrica!" and, without waiting for further reply, quitted the apartment.—"This, then," cried the young duchess clasping her hands with emotion, "this then is the promised kindness of Brabant! This is the commencement of that misery to which I have consigned myself. Oh,
my

my people, how great is the sacrifice I have made you !”

At that moment Ulrica entered the room. Since her marriage the princess had forbore all reflection on the duke ; but at this cruel instance of caprice, as she esteemed it, all her moderation forsook her, and she threw herself in the arms of her friend in an agony of sorrow—“ Oh, my friend ! my ever revered monitress, my more than parent !” exclaimed she, “ it is doomed that we must part.”—“ Part !” cried Ulrica tremblingly.—“ Yes ; the duke, inhuman that he is, wills it so.” Ulrica turned pale.—“ He has conceived a jealousy against my dearest friend !”—“ Against me ! Oh, for what cause ?”—“ Alas, I know not what he suspects. What have I not to apprehend from such a commencement of his hated power ? Oh ! how shall I support my sorrows, unaided by the soothing voice of friendship ?”—“ Unhappy man !” cried Ulrica with indignation : “ thy mean suspicions are thy punishment ; but, alas ! they also destroy the

the happiness of the innocent !” — Then regarding the princess with the tenderest concern — “ Ah ! when I look on thee,” continued she, “ child of my earliest cares ; thee, who I had fondly presaged would have been equally great and happy ! — when I behold thee torn by a rude tyrant from these aged arms, and exposed to all his cruelties, my heart sinks, and I view the wreck of all my promised happiness.”

Jaquelina suppressed her grief, and rising superior to her afflictions, though her heart was filled with the acuteest anguish, tried to comfort her afflicted governess.

“ Be comforted, my friend !” cried she : “ time, and the propriety of my conduct, shall efface these causeless jealousies ; and you may yet see your Jaquelina happy :” then checking a sigh which would force itself — “ but if yet,” continued she with a heavenly smile of resignation, “ happiness still flies your friend, have you not instructed her to place her hopes in that world where no human force can wrest them

them from her? Let this thought, then, my Ulrica, give us patience, and sweeten the bitterness of that cup, which fortune forces us to taste!"

A few days after this conversation had passed, the duke and duchess, accompanied by the countess of St. Pol, and attended by a numerous and splendid retinue, set out for Brabant.

The parting between the princess and her friend was tender and affecting; yet Jaquelina suppressed the anguish of her heart in pity to Ulrica, whom grief had almost overpowered. Vainly she strove to give her comfort; all her fortitude had vanished at this cruel separation. Buried in the contemplation of the most gloomy objects, her heart became a prey to direful apprehensions. She views her beloved pupil about to be delivered up to a fate which she now upbraids herself with having urged her to—"Yes, it is I, inhuman that I was," continually she cried, "that took advantage of that exalted sense of duty which I well
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knew you possessed, and forced you to accept this misery. Oh, my child! my beloved Jaquelina! why do you not reproach your cruel friend? Why do those lovely eyes yet beam with mildness on her who gave you to this cruel tyrant? But, alas! they convey a deeper reproach than words could give.”—“ Ah, dearest madam!” cried the princess, “ forbear reflections on one whom I would esteem as well as obey. Ah! encourage not, I conjure you, my repugnance by your example. In pity to your Jaquelina conquer your resentment, and remember you render her culpable in suffering reflections on Brabant.”

Ulrica viewed the princess with admiration; she wept over her with exultation and delight:—“ Yes, my child!” cried she, “ I will profit by thy admirable example. I will suppress my indignation in the love I bear thee. Thy angelic patience under suffering teaches me moderation. And, oh! that thy virtues may meet with the reward they so much merit!”

The

The duke and duchess with their train having arrived within a few leagues of Brabant, a grand procession advanced to meet them, the order being as follows :—

A detachment of cavalry followed the ushers, the receivers, the pensionaries, the councillors, secretaries, and deputies, of the three chief towns of Brabant. Then came the noblesse, prelates, two halberdiers, the kettle drums, and trumpeters of the court ; four chamberlains ; the herald at arms, bearing the livery, the belt and standard of Brabant.

Having received the homage of this august cavalcade, the duke gave orders to proceed towards the city, whilst the procession preceded the carriage of their sovereign in the same order as they had advanced.

All the streets of Brabant were ornamented with trees, placed at different distances, forming walks. The houses were decorated with tapestry, and emblems analogous

logous to the circumstance of the union of the houses of Brabant and Bavaria.

Whilst Brabant stiffly bows, the young duchess receives, with the greatest sensibility, the benedictions of a numerous crowd, assembled from all the towns of Brabant. The most heart-felt satisfaction sparkled in every eye on the sight of Jaquelina; and every tongue incessantly repeated, 'Long live the duke and duchess of Brabant!' After mass was celebrated, the procession returned to the palace-royal, where a majestic throne was raised. The duke and duchess having seated themselves, the states took the oaths of fidelity to Jaquelina, proclaiming her duchess of Brabant. A herald at arms then advanced to the edge of the throne, and cried aloud, three times, 'Long live the duke and duchess of Brabant!' and all the people repeated it with the strongest marks of enthusiasm. The trumpets sounded, and the cannon roared on the ramparts: gold, silver, and copper medals were thrown among the people with figures emblematical

cal of the occasion. A grand ball in the evening closed the joyous day, and the court vied in shewing the most delicate attentions to their lovely mistress, who received these marks of regard with the most grateful sensibility.

The various claims upon her time and attention diverted the mind of the princess from dwelling too much upon painful ideas; but as the hurry and bustle attendant upon such great occasions ceased, still, in spite of every effort, would they obtrude themselves, and a deep melancholy took possession of her soul. Vainly she strove to conceal, under a feigned cheerfulness, a dejection which she saw gave umbrage to the duke; but the slightest scrutiny might have pierced through the thin disguise that a mind so open, pure, and ingenuous, could assume.

The unhappiness she felt from the severity of the duke's disposition was augmented by Blanch, who would take frequent occasions before him to notice the
change

change in Jaquelina's manners. The feeble attempts of the duchess to laugh off the imputation, with the evident confusion she would betray at her dejection being noticed, increased the suspicions of the duke, whose piercing eye would be drawn upon her glowing face with expression of fierce jealousy, as would fully gratify the malignancy of the countess's inveterate heart.

Perpetually harassed and tormented by these cruelties, the princess could only find consolation in the consciousness of having fulfilled every duty she owed her country and herself. Her condescending and amiable manners soon rendered her adored by the admiring people, even to a degree of love bordering on enthusiasm. At her approach every knee became flexible, and the homage she received was the spontaneous effusion of hearts overflowing with gratitude—not the servile adoration of an enslaved multitude.

Through her mediation many grievances were redressed, and under her auspices ge-
nius

nus and the liberal arts flourished. To the tale of misery, though unadorned but by the homely garb of truth, she ever lent an attentive ear; and though the proud oppressor shrunk beneath her reproving glance, yet would the mild persuasiveness of her voice often win from the grasp of vengeance the direful steel.

About this time the princess was informed of an event which plunged her into the deepest sorrow. This was the death of the lady Ulrica, who, sickened of the court of Hainault, after her departure had retired into a convent, where, in the course of a very short time, she quitted a life in which she had exercised every virtue that could adorn humanity.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

IT was the princess's delight to see those who surrounded her appear cheerful and happy, and it was one of her chief studies to render them so by every endeavour that benevolence could suggest; but with pain she remarked, that among the young maidens who attended her appeared one whose saddened air and dejected manners proclaimed a grief that no circumstance could banish; that though active and diligent in the performance of every duty, yet that she sedulously shunned partaking in the amusements of her companions, and never appeared so happy as when escaped from the observation which her extreme loveliness drew upon her.

The sweet and amiable manners of Sophia (for so was she called) had greatly endeared her to the princess; and her
heart,

heart, though ever feeling and compassionate, now felt unusually interested.

“I fear you are not happy with me, Sophia!” said the princess one day to her young attendant on seeing her more than commonly dejected—“Tell me if a change would contribute towards your felicity; and however unwilling I feel myself to part with you, you shall be free.”

“Ah, madam!” cried Sophia with an air of grief, “what can I have done to make you think thus hardly of my heart? But perhaps you are weary of my services; if so, I must submit with patience to my destiny.”—“I weary of you, Sophia! No, believe me; I esteem and love you; and it is that sentiment which makes me anxious to promote your happiness, even at the expence of my inclinations. Tell me but how I can serve you, and on me you will confer an obligation.” — “How condescendingly kind is your highness! But, alas, to remove the cause of that dejection, which,
in

in spite of my endeavours, has not escaped observation, is impossible."

"Confide, however, your griefs to me, my child!" cried the duchess with a compassionating aspect, "and perhaps you will find yourself agreeably deceived; my inclination, as well as power, is great to serve you."—"Ah, madam!" cried Sophia blushing through her tears, "I feel myself unable to confess what would perhaps lessen me in the esteem of her whose good opinion I prize above life. Suffer therefore to remain a secret in this bosom, that which, if discovered, would only add to my unhappiness."—"Be it so!" cried the princess, chagrined at a silence which deprived her of the pleasure of conferring happiness; "I will no more urge you on this subject."

"Ah, madam," cried Sophia penetrated with the liveliest grief, "I see you are offended! Sooner than bear your displeasure would I disclose every wish and thought of this weak heart. Deign then to hear what you have condescended to ask."—

“No, Sophia!” returned the princess, embracing her with emotion—“No motive shall ever compel you to disclose a secret which inclination would not prompt you to confide in me; but remember, that whilst you continue to deserve it, my friendship you may always depend upon.”—Sophia could no longer withstand this goodness; but, falling at her feet, she conjured her with streaming eyes to listen to her sorrows:—

“At the age of ten, madam,” said she addressing the princess, “I was left a sad orphan, with a fortune far unequal to support me in that state of affluence to which I had been accustomed, and what from my birth I appeared entitled to enjoy. A distant relation of my mother’s, who had always been extremely partial to her, compassionating my forlorn situation, determined on taking me to his home. Unfortunately his wife had conceived a jealousy of my mother, and strongly opposed receiving me; but Mr. Kreutzer (the name

of my kind friend), firmly bent on accomplishing his humane design, over-ruled every objection she raised, and forced her, however unwilling, to consent.

“ At first Mrs. Kreutzer treated me with coldness and disdain, though she took a secret pride in the praises bestowed on me by her neighbours for the rapid improvements I made in those accomplishments which through the bounty of her generous husband I was instructed in : but time, and my unremitted assiduities to please her, at length did away those prejudices which she had felt against me ; and she was beginning to regard me with an affection that filled with delight the heart of my kind friend, when unfortunately Frederic Kreutzer her son, who was bred to the sea, and had been long absent on a voyage of discovery, now returned home. Ah, madam !” cried Sophia, breaking off her narrative, whilst her whole countenance became animated beyond description—“ had you but seen Frederic Kreutzer, I am sure you would have

been pleased with him ! Though not absolutely handsome, yet he had an air so free, and so simply noble, that at once ensured respect without commanding it ; whilst so open, so ingenuous were his manners, that his very soul seemed to dwell upon his lips."

It was not difficult for the princess now to divine the cause of Sophia's dejection ; but, unwilling to abash her by rallying her on the warmth of her description, she let her without interruption proceed.—

" Young Kreutzer had not been seated many minutes," continued Sophia, " when in a low voice I heard him enquire of his mother who I was. ' Oh ! ' returned Mrs. Kreutzer in answer to his enquiries, ' Sophia is the daughter of Matilda Gellert, whom you must have heard your father formerly courted, and who, forsooth, because she was a beauty, affected to look down upon her equals : but pride, you see, always has a fall ; for, marrying an officer in one of the duke of Saxe Gotha's regiments,

ments, against the consent of her father, he died without leaving her a shilling. But, notwithstanding *this*, they lived as if the greatest wealth was at their command, till the death of Captain Lessing (for that was his name) put an end to such extravagance; and then, what with grief and mortified pride, Matilda sickened, and shortly followed her husband, leaving poor Sophia with a fortune very short of what folks had been taught to expect would have been the portion of a daughter of Captain Lessing. Mr. Kreutzer, taking pity on her situation, brought her home, and has not spared expence, I can assure you, on her education: but for my part I grudge it not, though not a tenth part was bestowed on mine, notwithstanding my fortune trebled hers, as Sophia is a good girl, and is content to stay at home with me, and does not give herself the airs of a beauty, and gad and flirt about as the other girls of her age are seen continually to do.'—Mrs. Kreutzer, in delivering this account, had not thought it

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necessary

necessary to lower her voice ; when feeling myself distressed beyond measure, I withdrew, unable longer to conceal my tears.

“ I saw indignant blushes suffuse the manly countenance of young Kreutzer at an delicacy which had forced me from the room, and I pleased myself with fancying I read in it a generous pity for my misfortunes.

“ As if a knowledge of my dependent state had raised me in his eyes, on our next meeting he regarded me with increased respect, and, taking my hand with an air of tenderness and regard, ‘ I find, Miss Lessing,’ cried he, ‘ that I have the honour to be allied to you ! Will you allow me to claim a relationship which gives me so much pleasure, and suffer my endeavours to obtain a place in your friendship ? Perhaps, when you know me more, you may think me worthy : at present I cannot presume you will give it me, however you have contrived to secure mine.’ Though inwardly much pleased with this compliment, I could not find words to answer him :

him: curtsying therefore in silence, I took up my work, and seated myself beside his mother. Perfectly freed from all embarrassment by his polite and easy address, I joined in the conversation which now took place, when, as my eyes now and then involuntarily strayed from my work, I could not but observe the fixed attention with which Frederic surveyed me, and the evident pleasure with which he appeared to listen to every word I uttered.

“The animated and lively manners of young Kreutzer, and his solicitude to please me, rendered the house of my benefactor but too delightful; and I found, to my infinite concern, that my repose was likely to be endangered by an addition so captivating.

“The thousand nameless attentions, and the distinctions he paid me in preference to all the young females who visited at his father's, with the peculiar softness which marked his air whenever he addressed me, made it visible to every eye that I had made

a conquest of his heart : but, armed by my obligations to his parents against appearing to be sensible of the thousand amiable qualities he possessed, I chose rather he should suspect me of coldness or ingratitude, than that I should be forgetful of my duty ; and therefore forced into my manners, when with him, an indifference that I was far, very far, from feeling.

CHAP. IV.

“**M**R^S. KREUTZER, in her own mind,” proceeded Sophia, “had destined for her son the rich heiress of her brother, a wealthy merchant, who dwelt in the same town with herself, and indeed had already secured his consent for the match taking place whenever the young couple should be inclined—a circumstance she little doubted of.

“Mrs. Kreutzer, though possessing a temper warm, irritable, prone to error, and obstinate in prejudice, was not destitute of good qualities—being generous, friendly, and of principles invincibly strict. As it was an invariable rule in her conduct never to forgive an injury, so she made it equally a point of conscience never to forget a benefit.

“Frederic, who tenderly loved his mother, saw and pitied her weaknesses; and,

finding by experience that opposition only irritated and offended her, forbore ever entering into any kind of argument, preserving, in all their little differences, a respectful silence—which doubly endeared him in the eyes of a father, whose approbation it was his study to obtain.

“ The time for young Kreutzer’s departure drew near, when one day, on our being assembled at dinner, I observed an unusual degree of exultation swell the countenance of Mrs. Kreutzer; whilst, on the contrary, with pain I remarked, that on my benefactor’s appeared a gloom, which he vainly endeavoured to hide from observation.

“ Mrs. Kreutzer, solely occupied with her own thoughts, perceived not the visible change in the manners of her husband; but with difficulty having restrained herself, till the servants were withdrawn, from disclosing that which seemed to afford her such infinite satisfaction, no sooner found herself at liberty than she eagerly availed herself of it, and thus addressed her son:—

‘ You

“ ‘ You must know, my dear Frederic,’ said she, ‘ that I have long had in contemplation the seeing you happily settled—’ Young Kreutzer bowed—‘ that is, married, I mean—’ Frederic coloured and looked foolish enough, but did not interrupt her: ‘ And whom, of all the young women you know,’ continued she with a smile of vast self-approbation, ‘ do you suppose it is I have resolved on for your wife? Come, you shall guess!’—‘ Indeed, my dear madam,’ returned he smiling, ‘ you have given me an impossible task——’

“ ‘ What think you of Caroline Kaestner?’—‘ Oh, for Heaven’s sake, my dear madam!’ interrupted Frederic with vivacity, ‘ name not to me that piece of still life, that demure little prude, who would fain persuade the world she is what she appears to be—Oh, she would act upon me as a dead calm at sea!’—‘ What! then you prefer the lively, the witty Louisa Gerstenberger!’—‘ Oh, worse, infinitely worse! She holds a perpetual warfare with mankind; the in-

discriminating severity of her tongue, like a devouring fire, equally destroys friend and foe, and would keep me in continual alarms: storms, hurricanes and tempests would be preferable!—‘ Well, but what say you to the charming Ida Kliest? ’—‘ That I should fancy myself married to a cameleon, as her humour as often varies as to appearance that animal does his skin: the mirth that would one day please her, would disgust her the next—the wind itself is more to be depended on; and before ever we are united, I must change my nature.’—‘ Matilda Cronegh? ’—‘ Oh, her insufferable levities would give me greater cause for apprehension than what, from the small portion of charms Nature has endowed her with, I should have real occasion to dread!’—‘ Ulrica Schlegel? ’—‘ Alas, in pity, madam,’ interrupted Frederic impatiently, ‘ relieve me from apprehensions so odious as your having selected any of these ladies for your son!—and truly,’ continued he laughing, ‘ in the present unmerciful vein
I feel

I feel myself in, even her you have so kindly destined for me may come in for her share of censure, if you do not quickly satisfy my curiosity.'—'Oh, but it is no joke!' cried Mrs. Kreutzer, vexed at his levity.—'You are so very difficult, my son,' said Mr. Kreutzer, forcing a smile, 'that I should like to know the kind of woman that could please you—Come, describe her!'—A blush suffused the countenance of young Kreutzer, which became animated beyond description.

" 'Though I am not indifferent to beauty,' cried he, 'yet my wishes would be satisfied with her possessing but a portion of those charms I daily witness.'—In saying this, he fixed his speaking eyes on my glowing face.—'In her manners,' continued he, 'she must be gentle and unassuming; slow to censure, prompt to commend; and her heart, though feelingly alive to all the finer sensations of the soul, must be guarded by a forbearance, that I confess is rarely to be found, from giving too much way to a
 7 sensi-

sensibility which for me would have so many charms. Her countenance must speak her feelings, and the voice of reason alone give them utterance. Her actions, not her words, must tell the world her virtues: and in all our arguments, however she may have the advantage, she must appear more desirous of discovering the truth than anxious for conquest. In short,' continued he, 'she must be——' 'A new created being,' interrupted I smiling; 'for such a one as you have described exists only in your imagination.'—'You do your sex injustice, miss Lessing!' cried young Kreutzer with warmth; 'and without searching very far, such a woman may be found——Ah, that she was destined for me!'

" 'All this is very fine!' said Mrs. Kreutzer, impatient of a description which perhaps did not apply to her niece; 'but if Ulrica Schlegel does not possess all that you have so fancifully described, she has riches sufficient to supply all deficiencies.'

—'Ulrica

—‘Ulrica Schlegel, madam!’ cried Frederic with an astonished air: ‘Surely you have not fixed on her as a wife for your son?’—‘Indeed I have!’ returned Mrs. Kreutzer in anger.—‘I thank you, madam! but in a choice which so nearly concerns my happiness, I shall hope to be permitted to please myself!’—‘And pray, sir, may I presume to enquire,’ cried Mrs. Kreutzer, ‘what are the objections you have formed against my niece?’—‘Her being your relation, madam,’ returned Frederic, ‘will ever make me silent on that subject.’—‘I see how it is!’ interrupted Mrs. Kreutzer: ‘It is Sophia that you love!—it is her wheedling arts that have rendered you so indifferent to every other woman!’

“It is scarcely possible, madam, to describe Frederic’s confusion and my shame at this accusation.

“Shocked, terrified, and ready to expire with shame at a charge so injurious to my honour, though every instant expecting to faint, I felt unable to quit the room, but
remained,

remained, pale and motionless, riveted to my seat, in an agony that surpassed description. The confusion which had overwhelmed Frederic was only to be equalled by the anguish that filled his bosom at the sight of my distress: but quickly recovering himself, in compassion to me, 'Forbear, madam,' cried he, 'to confound the innocent with the guilty!—but wherefore do I give so harsh a term to a sentiment which reflects honour on me? Yes, madam,' continued he with a firm yet respectful air, 'I confess I am not indifferent to the most amiable of her sex: and if in my cousin I have found all those perfections united which I had despaired of finding in woman, blame not her for possessing them, but rather *me*, if you can, for not being blind to such perfection—Ah! then, cease, I conjure you, to suspect a heart so noble, so virtuous as what she possesses, of having recourse to any arts to captivate my affections. From the first hour of our meeting, I was ambitious of obtaining her friendship: I will

say

say more—I aspired to excite a warmer sentiment; and to have succeeded would have yielded me a delight that I have not words to express: but though superior to her sex in ingenuous candour, to me her conduct was uniformly guarded by ‘a pudency so sweet *,’ that till this moment I have wanted courage to confess the passion her merits, more than her loveliness, had inspired.’—‘Oh! this is too much!’ cried Mrs. Kreutzer trembling with rage: ‘To dare thus before my eyes to acknowledge a passion for a woman whom you have just heard me declare I would never receive as your wife!—But no doubt you are authorised by your father, and I see plainly it was for this intent Sophia was brought into the family!’

“I arose now to quit the room.—‘Stay, my dear child!’ cried Mr. Kreutzer, kindly taking my hand—‘stay till you see this intemperate heat corrected by adversity!’

* Shak. Cymb.

Then

Then turning gravely towards the astonished Mrs. Kreutzer, 'In receiving Sophia to my home,' said he, 'I meditated not a wife for my son—The smallness of her fortune was, I confess, the objection, though her merits perhaps deserved a fate superior ; but, now that poverty is fast gathering round this house, and ruin—absolute ruin—is staring me in the face, I must doubly oppose an union that would involve her in it.'

'Ruin !' cried Mrs. Kreutzer aghast.—

'Yes, Gunilda !' returned he sighing ; 'a friend, for whom I have pledged myself, has absconded, and left me to pay the forfeit of his breach of faith—Hourly I expect his numerous creditors to demand of me those sums I have passed my word to answer. Alas, it is for you I feel ! Where shall I find means to shelter you from that poverty for which you are so little prepared ?' Then turning towards Frederic, 'See you not, my son,' continued he, 'the impossibility of an union with your cousin ?'

'The young man arose in silent agony,
and

and walked towards the window. Ah ! how did I long to give him comfort, and, but for the presence of his mother, the sight of his distress would have extorted from me a confession that would have given him peace.—‘ But be not apprehensive on Sophia’s account !’ said my protector, observing his distress ; ‘ a friend of her mother’s has, at my instance, procured her an appointment about the person of the duchess. She shall at least escape the ruin which my imprudence has plunged you in.’

“ ‘ And think you, my benefactor, my more than father !’ cried I, falling upon his neck, and bathing his face with my tears, ‘ that Sophia will enjoy splendor, when those to whom she is indebted for every thing are struggling with want ?——Perish such ingratitude !—Ah never will I consent to quit you ! As I have shared your affluence, so will I share your poverty. Take, receive, not as a gift, but as your due, the little pittance left me by my father : would it were a thousand times the sum ! for more,
infinitely

infinitely more have I received from you than the wealth of nations could repay.'

"Powerful emotions for some time prevented the speech of Mr. Kreutzer; then pressing me with fond delight to his bosom, 'Noble, matchless Sophia!' exclaimed he: 'Ah, how are all my cares, my anxious cares, repaid by this exalted proof of your gratitude! Yet think not I will accept your generous offer—No! my heart revolts at the bare idea of bereaving my orphan charge of her scanty portion.'—'And do you then deny me a pleasure so delightful as that of supplying your necessities? Is your Sophia so unworthy, that from her you will not receive a benefit?' Then taking with a timid air the hand of Mrs. Kreutzer, 'Ah, madam!' cried I, 'condescend to join your entreaties to mine, and by your influence subdue the proud heart of my benefactor.'

"Mrs. Kreutzer wept, but would not reply.—'I see,' cried I, 'that both my benefactors disdain to hold themselves obliged to

to me ! But you, Frederic—will you not second me ? Ah ! if you knew how much my heart is interested, you would not, could not refuse me !”

“ Ah, miss Lessing ! what a task would you impose ! Think you that I can plead for your stripping yourself of that which one day perhaps you may feel the want of ? or that I can bear to see the authors of my being encountering miseries, and fortify my heart against their accepting the means to save them ?—Suffer me then to be silent, that I may preserve my duty : Oh that by me their wants could be supplied !—that—but it is in vain repining—a few years perhaps will afford me the means ; but, alas ! till then, what may they not suffer ?”

“ He turned from me, unwilling I should perceive the anguish of his soul. Again I urged my noble-minded friend to accept that which I no longer considered as my own, and equally in vain I refused to quit him :—he was inflexibly firm in his resistance,

resistance, and I was at length compelled to relinquish the contest.

“ Mrs. Kreutzer, flattering herself with the hope of retrieving her husband’s affairs by the projected union of her niece and Frederic, bore with apparent firmness her change of fortune. Not having the smallest apprehensions that her son would any longer oppose an alliance that now would be so highly advantageous, she waited upon her brother, and without reserve laid open her affairs ; little doubting, from his former conduct, but that he would with eagerness embrace the means of saving her from the ruin which, without his assistance, must inevitably ensue : but, how all the gay, the delightful hopes with which she had pleased her imagination fled, when, having finished her account, with a cold and frigid air he lamented the folly and imprudence of Mr. Kreutzer, declined all interference in his affairs, and, finally, forbade her thinking any more of the intended alliance

alliance between his daughter and her son!

“ Astonished and confounded at a reception so different from what her hopes had formed, and irritated at reflections cast on a husband whom she really loved, Mrs. Kreutzer withdrew from her unnatural brother with a bosom glowing with resentment.

“ But, still governed by prejudice, she only blamed me as being the primary cause of her disappointment; since, but for Frederic’s fatal predilection in my favour, she doubted not but he would have paid those attentions to his cousin, which might have secured her heart, and thus have induced her father to grant his consent to their union.

“ Perceiving her increased dislike, and that no endeavours of mine could abate her prejudices, I no longer opposed a removal from a house in which I found myself an unwelcome inhabitant.

“ As my benefactor had predicted, large demands were soon made upon him; and
from

from a state of affluence he found himself reduced to the most frightful indigence, when a friend of some consequence at court, interesting himself in his favour, procured him the governorship of the Dark Tower.

“ A visible alteration took place in the manners of young Kreutzer, when he found I no longer declined quitting his family. His attentions to me ceased, and a studied coldness marked his air whenever he addressed me.—‘ How unjust are you, Frederic,’ cried I one day to him, ‘ thus to quarrel with your friend !—Why are you angry at a removal that you well know only the most painful necessity could oblige me to?’—‘ And are you indeed unwilling to leave—to leave this house—and friends who love you so dearly, Sophia ?’ cried he with eagerness.—‘ Indeed, indeed I am !’ returned I with warmth. Ah, how could you think I could quit those to whom I owe so much, without the most painful sacrifice?’—‘ Were I perfectly convinced of this, Miss Lessing,” cried he sighing, ‘ I should

should not feel this anguish:—Yes; it is the thought, the distracting thought, that soon those charms of person and of mind, which I have contemplated with such delight, will be given to another, that causes this petulance—that makes me so unjustly reflect upon you!—Ah, what right have I to be offended?—What claim have I to expect your remembrance?’ ‘The most powerful one!’ interrupted I, ‘Gratitude! That will always give you a place in this bosom.’—‘Alas! you owe me none, Miss Lessing!’ returned he mournfully, ‘and I feel it is my duty to advise you to accept the splendid offers which no doubt will soon await your acceptance.’—‘Perhaps that is a duty,’ returned I blushing, ‘that I should least wish you to perform.’—‘Great God! what is it I hear? Ah, Sophia,’ continued he, seizing my passive hand, ‘let your voice sanction the presages of this fond heart: Mock not, I conjure you, with an empty shadow, a passion so pure, so ardent as mine.’

“ I turned away my face covered with blushes.—‘ Ah ! may I then trust to the flattering suggestions that this silence and those blushes excite ? Speak : Tell me that I am not indifferent to you, and I will defy the shafts of cruel fortune to injure my repose.’ ‘ Believe then,’ cried I with a trembling voice, ‘ what will make you happy ; and rest assured, no circumstance can ever banish the remembrance of Frederic Kreutzer from my heart.’—To describe the rapture and gratitude which he felt at these words is impossible. Suffice it to say, he soon drew from me a full confession how dear he was to me ; and yet, ungrateful that he was ! he still repined at my removal from his parents, however painfully mortifying he might perceive was my stay.

“ The time now arrived for my departure ; when, taking a tender and affecting leave of my kind benefactor, and a grateful one of his wife, I quitted that habitation in which I had so many years enjoyed peace.”—‘ But Frederic,’ interrupted the duchess, ‘ you mention

mention not him.'—'Oh, madam,' returned Sophia, 'he quitted —— some time before I left it, nor have I heard of him since. Mr. Kreutzer, though he frequently writes, forbears to name him: and it is that, and the uncertainty I am in respecting his situation, which occasions the dejection you have noticed.'

The princess, charmed with the many amiable traits which had discovered themselves in the character of her favourite during her little tale, sympathised in her sorrows, yet chid her for giving way to apprehensions which destroyed her peace; and dismissing her without making known her intentions, she wrote to Mr. Kreutzer, proposing Sophia for his son, assuring him that, if fortune alone was the obstacle that had impeded their union, that obstacle no longer existed, as she had secured to Sophia what would be sufficient to maintain them both in affluence.

About a month had elapsed, when one day, as the princess was alone with her fa-

vourite, one of her attendants informed her that a young man requested to speak in private with her highness. Jaquelina, surprised, demanded his name, when the domestic said he believed he called himself Frederic Kreutzer. “Frederic Kreutzer?” exclaimed Sophia in an agitation of pleasure and astonishment, “Ah, no! impossible!—it cannot be!” The princess smiled, and, without satisfying her anxiety, ordered that he might be admitted; when in a few minutes a young man of a graceful presence entered the room, bearing in his hand a letter, which he presented to the princess on his knees.

The colour forsook the cheek of Sophia, and she was obliged to support her trembling frame against the princess’s chair, to save herself from sinking to the ground.

Divided betwixt love, gratitude, and respect, Frederic (for it was he) knew not how to conduct himself. Love inclined him to fly to his adored Sophia, and thank her for that sensibility his presence had excited, whilst respect and gratitude chained him

him to the feet of his royal mistress; who, perceiving his distress, raised him with an enchanting smile; and giving him the hand of the blushing Sophia, "Take that," cried she, "and continue to merit it by a constancy as praiseworthy as that disinterested attachment which inclines me to reward you with such an inestimable treasure!" Saying this, she hastily arose, and, without giving them time to reply, quitted the room.

On retiring to her apartment she broke open the letter, which she found was from Mr. Kreutzer, and contained a respectful assurance of submitting the disposal of his son entirely to her pleasure, with the most grateful acknowledgments for her condescension.

Charmed with this compliance, Jaquelina hastened to the young pair, bearing in one hand a small casket, and in the other a letter. "Here, Frederic," cried she presenting the former to him with Sophia, "receive this additional testimony of my friendship.

ship: the greatest proof I have already given you. This used with care will preserve you from the miseries of want, whilst the other ensures your happiness." Then turning towards Sophia, she gave her Mr. Kreutzer's letter.

"This," cried she, "sanctions a passion which gives me pleasure to reward: and in bestowing you on this worthy young man, though I lose your society, yet the certainty of having rendered you happy, prevents my feeling regret." At the feet of the duchess, Frederic and his Sophia now poured forth the grateful effusions of their hearts; but the gratitude of the latter was chiefly confined to the dumb eloquence of looks, whilst Frederic's was lively and impassioned.

The prejudices of Mrs. Kreutzer having still remained with equal force, Mr. Kreutzer had, in compliance with her humour as well as from prudential motives, forbore to name his son in his letters to Sophia: and tho' the duchess's letter effectually removed
every

every reasonable objection she could urge, yet the idea of receiving as a daughter the child of a hated rival, was such a mortifying wound to the pride of Mrs. Kreutzer, that in her heart she ever from that moment bore a secret grudge against the princess for her interference.

C H A P. V.

AT the celebration of some great festival in Brabant, a grand masked ball was given by the duke. The entertainment was held in the gardens belonging to the palace ; in the midst of which stood a superb temple, which the duchess had erected in honour of Diana. A grand portico led to its lofty dome ; and a colonnade two columns deep, commencing at the portico, met in an oval direction, and formed a magnificent area. The colonnade was crowned with balustrades ornamented with figures analogous to the deity to whom the edifice was dedicated, and consisted of above a hundred pillars, forming various walks. In the middle of the area was placed the figure of the goddess preparing for the chace ; and to the right and left two beautiful fountains refreshed the atmosphere with their sparkling showers.

flowers. Pillars of oriental granite and porphyry, of the Ionic order, supported the spacious dome, whose interior was ornamented with rich paintings descriptive of the goddesses, whilst the niches were filled with figures of the sylvan deities. The temple was illumined by lamps of a thousand different dyes, fancifully wreathing the pillars and festooning their capitals, whilst a band of concealed musicians filled the air with the most ravishing sounds. A soft enchantment seemed to breathe around, and swelled the heart with emotions of the softest pleasure. Attended by a train of nymphs, light, elegant, and sportive, the princess appeared as the deity to whom the temple was dedicated : and perhaps a more charming groupe could not have been exhibited. Soon a motley assemblage covered the enamelled turf, and filled the spacious dome, whilst the gay fantastic dance is formed in various parts. The festivity of the scene had exhilarated the spirits of Jaquelina, and she entered with some de-

gree of life into the different amusements that presented themselves.

Sickenings at the admiration her beauty had excited, the envious Blanch, with the severest scrutiny, watched every movement of the lovely duchess, anxious to discover cause for censure. And as some fell demon infests the troubled spirit of the care-worn wretch, and banishes from his breast every approach of pleasure, so did she perpetually haunt the anxious Brabant, pouring into his attentive ear her invidious remarks, and, by awaking his jealous fears, effectually poisoned every enjoyment that the festive scene presented.

Among the motley groupe which formed the train of the princess, was a tall elegant figure, habited as a minstrel, who without partaking, or seeming to regard, the various amusements that presented themselves, kept in dejected silence by her side. The extreme elegance of his figure, and the peculiarity of his manners, which formed a striking contrast to the sportive gaiety of those

those who surrounded her, excited the attention of the princess, who felt interested for him, without knowing why. A lute hung gracefully at his breast, yet his hand swept not its tuneful strings till at the repeated instance of his gay companions; and observing that the princess appeared to expect his compliance, he drew his hand tremblingly across the instrument, and struck a few chords of a little melancholy air: then with an air of deep despondence, casting aside his lyre, he mixed among the crowd.

A train of mournful yet not unpleasing ideas rushed instantaneously into the mind of Jaquelina, and she listened in silent expectation of the strain being repeated—but no more could she perceive the musician who had awakened such recollections.

A soft melancholy stole over her senses, which she wished to indulge in scenes more consonant to her feelings; and quitting the gay assembly, she descended a winding slope, edged by tall pines, which conduct-

ed her to the brink of a noble lake that washed the foot of the descent ; and throwing herself upon a rustic bench she gave a loose to her reflections.

The scene was inexpressibly charming. On one side a beautiful cascade issued from beneath a dark shade of elms, and mingled with the broad expanse, whilst the other presented a view of hanging woods and shaggy wild declivities. The opposite banks were variously spotted with irregular tufts of fir and underwood, whilst trees of different descriptions crowned their summits, and fenced the vale from observation. The moon, just in the commencement of her wane, beautifully arched the tops of the lofty trees, and, throwing her mild beams upon the reflective deep, palely illumined the charming scene. The distant sound of instruments at intervals floated upon the lake, whilst a chorus band swelled the loud strain to the fullest pitch of harmony, till lost amongst the woods it died away in hollow murmurs.

The

The princess had remained some time absorbed in deep reflection, when her attention was roused by the sound of footsteps descending the vale. A sensation not unmixed with fear impelled her to retire; when an air so soft, so ravishingly sweet, issued from behind, that it fixed her to the spot in a kind of delicious enchantment. There was something in the composition which particularly excited her regard, and busy thought perplexed her imagination with variety of fancies. Her respiration almost ceased, and she remained listening with a beating heart to the touching strain, till a voice but too well remembered accompanied the instrument, in a cadence so mournfully touching as deprived her of all power of action. Astonishment and grief riveted her to the spot. Her trembling limbs could scarcely support her agitated frame. Deep and convulsive sighs burst from her heart, till at length completely overpowered by her emotions she uttered a faint ejaculation, and sunk to the ground.

At

At the very moment that the countess is preparing to follow her lovely cousin, she perceives the stranger, whose attentions and manners had so much excited her curiosity, descending the slope. Exulting in the idea that this was by appointment, and that the princess now had given some cause to justify her censures, she hastens towards the duke, who listened with greedy attention to suggestions so baleful to his peace, and eagerly accompanied her in search of the unfortunate Jaquelina; when, how were his fierce rage and jealousy excited, at finding her clasped with an expression of fond concern in the arms of an elegant stranger!

Blinded by his passion, he perceives not that she is insensible of her situation; but, snatching her with fury from his arms, he gives her to Blanch, and, unsheathing his sword, points it to the breast of the cavalier; who scarcely has time to place himself in a posture of defence, before he feels the murderous steel enter his body! when making a pass at the duke, which slightly wounds

wounds him, agonized with pain he sinks to the ground.

As the princess recovered from her swoon, what a scene of horror presented itself!—Forcibly detained in the arms of the countess, she beholds at a little distance the duke supporting his pale and agitated frame on a sword yet reeking with blood, whilst Blanch with a cruel triumph points to the ground, where bathed in a purple tide lay the hapless stranger. A shriek of horror escapes the duchess, and her senses again happily forsake her.

An account of the direful circumstance soon reached the company, who now were seen in crowds hastening towards the vale. Foremost among them appeared a figure of a majestic presence, under the habit of a pilgrim, whose eyes no sooner encountered the dreadful spectacle, than, darting forwards with impetuous eagerness, he raised the wounded cavalier, and pressed him to his bosom with a distracted air.

By this time a crowd of domestics bearing

ing with them torches had surrounded the wounded parties, when, with an air of command, he gave a signal to a set differently habited from the rest to bear off the body.

Brabant, faint and exhausted with loss of blood, and smarting equally with pain and anguish of mind, heeded not this order; whilst the attention of the company being solely occupied with the death-like appearance of the princess, the stranger was suffered to pass unmolested.

By the command of the duke, Jaqueline was now borne to the palace; and Lorch with an affected regard accompanied her, inwardly exulting at the misery which her cruel jealousy had excited. A gloomy darkness now succeeded the former brilliant scene. The lights were ordered to be extinguished, and the wondering guests retired to their respective homes, their minds filled with variety of conjecture. As the princess began to recover her recollection, the dreadful events of the night rush with horror into her mind: yet not sufficiently

ficiently collected to trace distinctly the dreadful scene which had plunged her into insensibility, she fearfully interrogated the countess.

There is a something so awful in the appearance of true virtue, that even vice, singly, dares not accuse it; and Blanch, however she had exulted in the idea of overwhelming with confusion her lovely cousin, could not summon courage sufficient to tax her with a crime, which she would willingly have believed her guilty of.

She therefore related simply the uneasiness which her absence had occasioned, and the dreadful effects of the duke's jealousy at finding her in the arms of a stranger. The princess heard her with mingled grief and surprise; a thousand different fears assailed her heart; she found it impossible to justify herself. As she was unconscious by what means she had become in a situation so improper, yet relying on her innocence for supporting her against the fury of her lord, she prepared herself to meet him; when,

when, at the same moment that she was rising, casting down her eyes she perceived, bound round her arm, the ribbon which she had formerly presented to Gloucester.

Now she no longer doubts who the hapless being was that had fallen a sacrifice to the duke's vengeance: a dreadful conviction of the sad truth forces itself to her mind; her senses begin to unsettle, her questions are quick and hurried, her breath grows short, and her eyes gaze unconscious of their object.

At this moment the duke entered the room, but Jaquelina heeded him not. The storm of grief had borne her like a drooping flower to the ground, and she remained for some time fixed in silent grief; then madly rising from her seat, "Tell me," cried she, turning towards Blanch with a wild distracted air, "tell me if indeed it was he whom Brabant slew? Ah! wherefore should I doubt it? Was it not *his* voice, so soft, so full of melody, that charmed

charmed my soul—that voice whose sweet-
 ness would melt the very rocks! Ah, yes,
 too sure it was! Now, now!” cried she
 starting with phrensed horror, “now I view
 his gaping wounds! See how the purple
 tide issues from them! Alas, how wan he
 looks!—Oh, thou loved pale one, do not
 fly me! I did not kill thee! Alas, alas!”
 continued the princess unheeding him,
 “’tis a bloody world when tyrants reign!
 —Behold that victim! See how his face is
 convulsed with pain! He writhes under
 the murderous stroke. He sinks—he falls!
 Oh, distracting sight!—death seizes his
 victim!”—Her agonies were now beyond
 description, and her surrounding attendants
 with difficulty restrained her from commit-
 ting violence on herself.

Spent with this exertion, for a few mo-
 ments she became more calm; when again
 relapsing into madness, “See,” cried she,
 her eyes wildly gazing on inanimate ob-
 jects, “see how he pursues me with his
 frowns!—Ah, there are a thousand deaths
 con-

conveyed in every look—Nay, upbraid not Jaquelina with the barbarous deed—it was Brabant's. Behold how his hands are dyed with blood!"—Then turning towards the duke, "Oh, thou cruel one! if blood will satiate thy vengeful fury, take mine. I prize not life, since thou hast destroyed 'the goodliest work of fair creation's hand.'"

Brabant was no longer able to conceal his rage; and finding the duchess not in a condition to satisfy his enquiries, he withdrew with an intention to discover, if possible, the name of his unknown rival: but fruitless was every search he made; the strangers had escaped his farther vengeance.

Much about this time the dukes of Bedford and Gloucester had been employed by their brother in quelling some insurrections which had taken place in French Flanders. Hearing of the entertainment proposed to be given by the duke of Brabant, Gloucester formed the rash design of seeing Jaquelina without being liable to discovery.

Unwil-

Unwilling to conceal any thing from a brother so tenderly loved as Bedford, he acquainted him with his resolution ; when, alarmed at a design so imprudent as well as dangerous, the duke employed every diffusive he was master of to induce him to abandon such an enterprize : but though Bedford, from his admirable character, had gained a surprising ascendancy over the mind of Gloucester, yet in this instance he could not prevail ; and finding him obstinately determined on his rash design, he generously resolved to share his danger.

Habited therefore in the character of a pilgrim, with a chosen band of domestics he accompanied his brother.

Gloucester, satisfied with being allowed to approach the princess, hardly dared to form to himself the wish of making himself known to her, so fearful was he of creating suspicions that might prove injurious to her peace ; till overcome at perceiving the impression the little plaintive air had given

her, he tore himself in an agony away, and mingled with the crowd.

Finding his mind too painfully disturbed to enter into any of the amusements, or even to bear a scene so dissonant to his feelings, he flies from it in haste, and unfortunately takes the same path as the princess.

The duke of Bedford, who had for some time missed his brother, sought him in vain amongst the motley groupe, when at length a rumour reaches his ears of the disastrous circumstance which had taken place. A dreadful presage that it was his unfortunate imprudent brother filled his heart, and with impetuous eagerness he hurried to the fatal spot, where his eyes too soon beheld the dreadful confirmation of his fears.

No circumstance, however agonizing to his feelings, could rob Bedford of his admirable presence of mind; and perceiving that as yet the quality of his brother had escaped discovery, and that it was still possible to save his, as well as the honour of the unfortunate Jaquelina, he took advantage
of

of the general confusion which reigned, and hurried him from a scene which had proved so fatal.

Happily the wound Gloucester had received was in a part that gave the surgeon who attended him not the smallest apprehensions for his safety. Bedford, charmed at this discovery, now grew impatient for his immediate removal; when, having consulted the surgeon, on whom he had the firmest reliance, and finding that his brother could be removed without any danger, he instantly had him conveyed from Brabant.

By slow and easy journeys, they soon arrived beyond the power of the duke; and, from having the best assistance, and the unremitted attention of the best of brothers, Gloucester was restored to health.

But no sooner did the duke find his strength return, than he grew impatient for revenging the mortification he had suffered from a hated rival.

It was in vain Bedford combated this
second

second instance of imprudence with every argument that reason could suggest. Gloucester remained obstinately bent on the accomplishing of his rash design, and even expected his brother to bear him company: but this the duke with firmness refused, and Gloucester, however angry he felt at this denial, disdained reproach.

The night previous to his departure, with cold solemnity he rose to take leave of his brother. The noble heart of Bedford melted at the idea of the danger to which he was about to expose himself, and yet felt more at the afflicting one, that his honour would receive a stain from this acknowledgment of his clandestine intrusion. He took his hand, and pressed it with strong emotion to his heart: "You are then resolved, my brother?" cried he gazing on him with an expression of the deepest fraternal regret.—"I am," replied Gloucester, fullenly avoiding his offered embrace.

At this unkind return for all the love he
had

had at various times shewn him, Bedford was unable to conceal his grief.—“ And can you, Gloucester, thus treat a brother, who, to serve you, would sacrifice every thing but his honour? Think how from infancy in harmony we have trod the chequered path of life together, till reason, ripening into manhood, stamped a dignity on our friendship! Is this forgotten by thee? Has unjust resentment quite banished it from thy memory?”—“ Ah, never, never for one moment,” cried the duke with much emotion, “ have remembrances so dear been banished from this memory : it is my friend, my counsellor, my more than brother, who ceases to regard ties so binding! Could Gloucester desert thee thus, my brother? Ah, no : I feel myself too closely linked in friendship’s sacred bonds for any force to separate us ; but I complain not : Nature, it seems, has formed our hearts in different moulds !”

At this affecting remonstrance of a much-loved brother, the resolution of Bedford be-

gan to give way, and he determined, however against his better reason, to share the danger of his brother; but, when he considered he must also partake of his dishonour, he revolted with horror at the idea, and continued firm in his resolve.

“ I see with concern, my brother,” said he, “ that every generous sentiment is buried in the contemplation of an ignoble revenge; that in that even the lovely suffering Jaquelina is forgotten!” — “ Do I hear right? Jaquelina forgotten by Gloucester!” exclaimed the duke with an astonished air — “ Ah! she is dearer to this heart than the warm blood which plays around it!” — “ Is it then by covering her with dishonour that you would evince your love?” — “ What means my brother?” cried Gloucester much disturbed. — “ Already,” proceeded Bedford, “ by your imprudence you have injured her too deeply: you cannot but be conscious, that by that you have awakened the jealous fears of the duke: perhaps at this moment she is suffering all that

that the most inventive malice can suggest! Would you then stamp a justice on his cruelty, and doubly wound the peace of her you say you love?"

This was probing the feelings of Gloucester to the quick. Scarcely could he support the distracting idea of Jaqueline suffering by his imprudence: for a few moments he was incapable of reply; when, starting with violence from his seat, "Yes," cried he, "it is Gloucester that shall restore her to happiness! Quickly shall she be relieved from the tyranny of this oppressive monster!"—"What, by the death of Brabant?" demanded Bedford.—"Yes, or die in the attempt. Oh, how I pant to give her deliverance, and accomplish my revenge!"—"Should you survive, would the death of Brabant satisfy your wishes?"—"Ah, no! the lovely angelic fair would then be mine!"—"What, believe you that Jaqueline would wed her husband's murderer?"—Gloucester started. An obstacle so impossible to surmount had never before

suggested itself to his imagination, and he turned from the duke in silent confusion.

Having somewhat recovered his composure, he felt the full justice of his brother's arguments; and, throwing himself in his arms—"Oh, my brother!" cried he greatly affected, "you have conquered. Why have I not always suffered myself to be guided by your salutary counsels? Then had I not now to upbraid myself with being the cause of Jaquelina's sufferings."

Committing himself now entirely to the guidance of Bedford, Gloucester soon after accompanied his brother to England, where he vainly tried to divert his mind from the contemplation of past events.

In the mean time the unfortunate Jaquelina continued in a state little short of absolute insanity. A death-like paleness succeeded the roses which had once bloomed on her lovely cheeks: her eyes, robbed of all their wonted lustre, now only retained an expression of frantic grief; whilst
her

her luxuriant tresses, loose and dishevelled, played in wild disorder about her neck.

The sight of Blanch threw her into agonies, and she ceased not to accuse her of Gloucester's death ; but that barbarous woman, heeding not the pain she saw her presence gave, and contemplating with malignant pleasure the ruins of all that was amiable and lovely, daily visited her once fortunate, but now no longer dreaded rival.

Disappointed in his hope of discovering the name and quality of the mysterious stranger who had so much disturbed his repose, the duke meditated in his heart a revenge the most cruel against the princess, for the injury he had no doubt but his honour had sustained : yet, well convinced that she had gained the affections of the chief part of his subjects, he was compelled from policy to proceed with caution.

The court of Brabant, from experience, convinced to what lengths the jealous rage of their sovereign would carry him, had not, on the night of the celebration of their

festival, been surprised at witnessing its fatal effects ; and, without doubting, even for a moment, the purity of the duchess, had placed it to that account. Equally therefore from respect to her, whom they revered and loved to a degree of enthusiasm, as well as from dread of rousing the fierce anger of the duke, they had forborne all enquiry ; but the heart of each inly bled for the amiable princess, whose reason had fallen a sacrifice to her sufferings.

Well persuaded that the youth of Jaquelina would triumph over her disorder, Brabant, however anxious to take advantage of her present distracted state, saw the necessity, in order to accomplish his wished revenge, of imposing on the minds of his subjects a belief that he beheld the melancholy situation to which she was reduced with a concern becoming the most ardent affection. Nor was it difficult to persuade them of this belief, as the mild complacency of manners which the princess had ever preserved for the duke, however his
con-

conduct might have agonized her heart, with the seeming affection he evinced for her when in public, persuaded them that the most perfect harmony mutually subsisted, and easily induced them to credit his now apparent concern. During therefore each paroxysm of her disorder, he artfully introduced those into her chamber whom he knew to be her immediate partisans, and, by a timely display of well-dissembled grief, gained from their too credulous minds a degree of commiseration which he little merited.

The mournful sight of a beloved consort labouring under the most cruel of all maladies, appeared to render the duke incapable of attending to the cares of government; and his zealous friends loudly urged the necessity of the duchess's removal: but it was not till these entreaties were publicly made that Brabant would consent; and then, having yielded to their petitions with the air of a person who sacrifices his dearest inclinations to the happiness of others, he

retired, exulting in the idea that he now was at liberty to indulge his long-wished-for revenge. Willing to gratify his cruel malice to the utmost, he visited the unfortunate princess, whom he contemplated with that gloomy satisfaction which every tyrant feels at viewing the hapless object of his rage yielded up to his power. He found her, greatly to his surprise, though weakened to an excess, evidently recovering her reason. The strong emotion she betrayed at his appearance, which before had scarcely attracted her regard, convinced him of this truth, and inspired the malignant hope that, in the course of a short time, she would be fully sensible to the miseries of that fate to which it was his intention to consign her. He had already planned the abode which was to receive the ill-fated Jaquelina; and in this he had consulted his revenge to its full extent. At the extremity of his dominions, cold, comfortless, and exposed to the rude blast of every wind, was situated on the point of a huge rock, which

which reared its craggy sides from amid the watery expanse, a tower that, in former times, had been erected by the Brabantines as a place of confinement for those princes whose crimes rendered them obnoxious to society. Loud angry waves continually roared against the battlements, and shook, with terrific violence, its lofty sides. From the thick barred gratings, which scarcely admitted a ray of light, a view only of the wide ocean presented itself, till, from a sight so unvaried, the wearied eye turned away in sad despondence: nor did a vestige of ruined grandeur infuse into the mind a soft and not unpleasing melancholy; but all spoke the gloomy purpose for which it was intended.

This was the mansion, whose interior despoiled by mephitic vapours and unwholesome dews of all that could even satisfy the humble need of the sad wanderer who seeks a covert for his wretched head, which was to receive an illustrious princess, and the countess of St. Pol, in view-

ing Jaquelina, the lovely heiress of a mighty prince, doomed, in a gloomy prison, far removed from every comfort, to spend her wretched days, beheld the full accomplishment of her revenge.

Convoys by a close guard, the duchess, accompanied by Blanch, quitted Brabant amidst the tears and lamentations of a people who mourned her as a common parent. During the course of the journey Jaquelina frequently gave proof of returning sense; and the countess exulted in the idea that she would soon become sensible to the horrors of her fate.

Several times she questioned Blanch, and appeared to arrange her ideas with unusual collectedness; but, unwilling to afford her the slightest consolation, Blanch with a disdainful smile bade her be silent.—“Alas!” cried the unhappy Jaquelina, “why do you thus scorn me? Once you called me friend! Ah, you are not that Blanch that used to smile and soothe me with fair words! Surely it is cruel to sport with misery

misery like mine ! I never injured thee, my cousin. If I had, alas you could not surely have taken a more cruel revenge ! for—have you not killed Gloucester ?”

This idea again plunging her into a momentary insanity—“ Well I remember,” cried she, “ the idle tales they used to tell my youth, that to be great was to be happy. Fool that I was to credit them !—Ah, see you not that lowly swain who trips with blithsome step over the verdant mead, and beguiles his way with mirthful strains ? He can sing of joy and gladness ! Alas, could I ? Ah, no ! Mine would be the song of sad despair——And yet they tell me I am a princess !”

It was towards the close of the eighth day of their departure from Brabant that they reached the coast, where a small vessel waited in readiness to conduct them to the castle, which lay at the distance of about three leagues from the land. The wind was high, and hurried with impetuous violence the vessel through the angry waves.

Soon they lose sight of the fast retreating shore. The princess gazes with wistful earnestness around. In vain her eyes wander in search of some fixed object to rest on. A view only of the unquiet element appears. Alarmed, she casts them upon her conductors, whose gloomy countenances serve but to increase her terror. Wrapped in long watch-cloaks, at a respectful distance appeared the guards, who had thrown themselves on the deck, darkly bending their eyes to the ground, whilst not a voice, save the watchful helmsman's, disturbed the dreary stillness.

“Where am I?” cried Jaquelina, turning towards the countess trembling.—“Ah! wherefore is it that thus the cold wind so rudely presses on this weak frame, and, like the duke, blasts me with its cruel breath?—Alas! you answer not!—Surely it must be some fearful dream!”

A view now of the Black Tower darkens the prospect, and in a short time they are close upon the castle walls. Immediately the

the sailors hurry in their oars, and two of the soldiers quitting the vessel mount the steep ascent which leads to the gates.

The horn being sounded, an old man of a venerable appearance, slowly advancing with a mournful aspect, unlocks the portal. A dreadful foreboding seizes the heart of the princess, and renders her fully sensible of her approaching fate. She shrinks back with horror from the grasp of her attendants, who would bear her to the shore, and, unknowing what she does, clings to the countess, and, gazing on her with affecting earnestness in her face, seemed to implore protection; but that cruel woman commits her without pity to the domestics, who hurry her along, regardless of her entreaties.

A narrow court fenced by high walls, its passage almost closed by the long grass which dully whispered to the breeze, led to the tower; and the steward unlocking a huge iron door ushered them into a hall, whose gloomy arches and mournful echoes struck despondence to the soul. An immense

menſe oaken table and a few worm-eaten chairs compoſed the furniture of this dreary apartment; whiſt on its lofty walls the dews faſt gathering in large drops heavily deſcended to the ground, and by their continual fall had formed around a kind of channel. Through each crevice of the folding-doors the wind whiſtled its melancholy note, and often the loud blaſt ſhook the tower's ſtupendous bulk.

In vain the trembling Jaquelina caſt her eyes around for comfort!—A cheerleſs gloom alone prevails!—The vaulted roof echoes back her ſighs!—and lengthening ſhadows ſpeak to her apprehenſive heart the day's departure!

The counteſs, having ſafely conducted her hapleſs charge, now prepares to depart; but firſt ſhe ſummons a choſen ſet of domeſtics, to whom ſhe delivers with ſtrict injunctions the affrighted princeſs.—“What! Where am I?”—exclaimed Jaquelina, gazing with terror at this ſcene—“Ah! who are thoſe wretches to whom you thus commit

mit me?—Surely you mean not to leave me to the mercy of men whose very looks strike terror to my soul!”—“Oh, you will soon be reconciled to them,” replied Blanch enjoying her terror; “and whilst you are contented to remain within these walls, they have orders not to disobey your slightest wish.”

She now arose. “Oh my cousin!” cried the princess, springing forwards and laying her trembling hand upon her arm, “By the memory of our past friendship, by that love you have so often professed for the wretched Jaquelina, do not abandon me!—leave me not in an abode so hideous!”

“What, so soon disgusted with this charming mansion, Jaquelina!” cried the merciless Blanch laughing at her fears—“Oh, if Gloucester were but here, you would soon grow reconciled to all its horrors. But be not discouraged, child! Perhaps, some of these days, your gallant knight, when weary of his Ellen, will take compassion on the forsaken Jaquelina!”

“Inhu-

“Inhuman woman!” returned the princess, “well you know already the duke has sacrificed that unhappy prince to his barbarous revenge!”—“You are mistaken,” replied the countess with joy, perceiving her returning sense—“Gloucester still lives—yet lives but for his Eleanor!”—“Is it possible?” exclaimed the princess, clasping with emotion her hands—“Ah, surely, you do but trifle with my misery! Yet say again he lives, and, cruel as thou art, I yet will bless thee!”—“I give you then my word he lives! Does this satisfy you?”

The full heart of Jaquelina prevented her giving utterance to her feelings; but, raising her eyes towards heaven, such a gratitude animated them as even affected the insensible Blanch: but quickly repressing an emotion so foreign to her nature, and impatient to be gone, she hastily bade adieu to the princess, and was quitting the hall, when, at the prospect of being left, deserted, immured for ever, in an abode
so

so capable of inspiring terror, Jaquelina forgot the injuries she had received from Blanch, and, with all the energy of woe, besought her compassion. That cruel woman beheld her agonies unmoved, and impatiently withdrew her arm from her trembling grasp.—“What, and will you then indeed, my cousin, leave me?” cried the poor sufferer, terror again unsettling her sense—“Surely you cannot have a heart so hard! Ah, let me but attend you, though as a servant, and I will cheerfully obey your *harsh*est commands!”—“It is impossible,” returned the countess; “you do but waste your words: detain me not longer, I entreat you; the duke will be impatient of my stay.”

The door was now opened for the countess to withdraw, when the princess springing forwards caught a part of her robe, and stopped her passage; but a look from Blanch soon made the ready guards seize the struggling Jaquelina, and it was quickly closed against her.

With

With wild distraction she beholds from her grated window the countess already mounting the vessel's lofty side. Her cries reach the exulting Blanch, who, with a smile of triumph, waves her hand as the obedient winds bear her from the shore.

A sullen desperation for a moment seized the princess; then, madly breaking from her guards, she dashed her wretched head against her prison wall, and sunk wounded to the ground. A stream of blood issued from the wound, and the affrighted domestics bore her to her apartment doubtful of her recovery.

CHAP. VI.

THE great effusion of blood gave a happy turn to the princess's disorder, as it abated considerably the fever which had so long raged with violence through every vein; and though for several weeks she continued in a state that her life was despaired of, yet, at the expiration of that time, she found her reason perfectly restored.

With her disorder that keen and lively sense of disappointment fled, which to a feeling mind is its greatest source of pain; not that her spirit, broken by misfortune, yielded unresistingly to its force, but, brought up with that just sense of religion which teaches us that this life is but a mere passage to immortality, she resigned herself with calmness to the will of Heaven. The vivid glow of health had forsaken her cheek, and was succeeded by a languid delicacy,

delicacy, less beautiful, but more interesting to the heart ; whilst her mind, relieved of the afflicting idea of Gloucester's death, gradually recovered its serenity.

At times, however, as she beheld herself debarred from all intercourse with the world, denied, by the refined cruelty of Blanch, from diverting her mind by books from a contemplation of its misery—treated by all, except the steward of the castle, but as a miserable lunatic,—the natural impatience of youth would triumph over her fortitude, and, in an agony of grief, she would implore Heaven to release her from such a state of sufferance.

Without a guard closely following her steps, she was not permitted to pass the walls of the tower ; yet now and then, a few moments escaping their vigilance, she would throw herself upon the edge of the pointed rocks, which formed a kind of fortress around the tower, and mingle her tears with the salt waves that dashed continually their base.

She

She perfectly remembered the sad events which had caused her insanity, and little doubt was left in her mind as to the real motives which had influenced the duke thus to consign her to oblivion. Her eyes were opened to the perfidy of Blanch; and as she recalled to her memory a variety of circumstances which had sufficiently proved it, she wondered at her former blindness in so long fostering with kindness a serpent whose sting was continually pointed at her bosom.

Her patient suffering, and the sweet benignancy of her manners, insensibly won upon the heart of the old steward of the castle, to whose immediate charge she had been committed; and he allowed her privileges which, had they been known, his place might have paid the forfeit of his mercy; whilst his wife, whose temper though naturally harsh was not unpitying, having conceived a secret pique against the princess, obstinately persevered in treating her as a miserable lunatic. Whenever Jaque-

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lina,

lina, willing to relieve the irksomeness of her confinement by a little conversation, would question her on subjects which she thought her most capable of entering on, the fullen dame, with face averted, and lips more obstinately closed, would preserve the most provoking silence. It was in vain her husband endeavoured, by reason, to convince her of her error; she obstinately adhered to her duty, which was, she said, to treat the duchess as an insane; adding, that it was presumption in him to pretend to be wiser than his superiors, who no doubt would not have confined a lady of her great rank in such a place if they had not been convinced of her distracted state.

Finding that her prejudices combated with obstinacy every argument he could urge, and knowing that secret reasons gave them force, he ceased to reason with her any longer, and endeavoured, by redoubling his assiduities to his helpless charge, to atone for the wilful obstinacy of his wife.

The princess, however provoked at her
perfe-

perseverance in error, was charmed at the repeated instances of kindness she received from her old friend, and tried to evince her gratitude for a benevolence which she doubted not was shewn in contradiction to his orders, by the manner with which she received them. By his directions her apartments were rendered more habitable, and, in spite of some small murmurings on the part of his wife, they were furnished with many conveniences from those allotted him. Desirous of yielding her some amusement, he gave her the keys of a small oratory, which he knew contained a few devotional books, and in those she found what strengthened and considerably relieved her mind. To this sacred retreat she flew for consolation when bitter reflections forced themselves on her mind, and her fortitude began to sink under the oppression of thought. There, pouring forth the sorrows of her heart, and imploring her Creator's mercy, her woes seemed lessened, and her confidence revived.

Feeling

Feeling one day a curiosity to explore the apartments of the tower, and having hinted to the steward her desire, he readily consented to accompany her. Having fatigued herself with rambling amidst desolated apartments and mouldering walls, she was retiring, when her conductor led her into a large chamber, which time had less marked with its destructive hand. It was ornamented with the portraits of all those German princes whose actions had rendered them worthy of having their names transmitted to posterity.

As Jaquelina saw herself surrounded by a groupe of venerable personages, many of whom she remembered were her ancestors, she felt an involuntary awe.—“Alas,” cried she sighing, as she gazed upon the majestic though faded forms of a long line of heroes, whose illustrious deeds and virtuous lives had often been recounted to her, “these now, doubtless, enjoy the reward due to their exalted virtue! They enjoy peace; whilst their hapless relative is left to
struggle

struggle with every misery !" Then quickly checking her emotion—"But wherefore do I complain ? Perhaps on earth these were not more blest than the miserable being who now contemplates them ! What is the advantage of birth but a fallacious good ! Alas, the peasant and the king are equally the sport of fortune !"

In making these reflections she hastily turned away, when her eye encountered the well-known image of her beloved and yet regretted parent.—"It is my father !" cried she with an exclamation of surprise and pleasure—"Yes, madam," returned the old man, "it is indeed the portrait of the good count of Hainault that you see : Ah, how few princes are like him !"

The princess surveyed the loved form in silent grief. She recalled to her memory those calm, those happy days which had passed so serenely with him ; and, in contrasting them with her present misery,

her firmness forsook her, and she burst into a flood of tears.

“It is a hard fate indeed, my lady,” cried the old steward gazing intently upon her, whilst the tear of pity trembled in his eye, “for a lady so young, so beautiful, and of such high birth, to be immured in this sad place. Alas! to think it is only two years since, when, surrounded with all the pomp of royalty, I saw you enter Brabant, smiling like an angel on a crowd of happy people, whose hearts filled with joy at your approach! And then next to see you pale, almost motionless with fear, forced along by the rude hands of soldiers, and given as a prisoner to those whom you ought to have commanded! Ah, how did my heart bleed! but I dared not shew my grief.”

The tears of Jaquelina redoubled, and, leaning against the wall, she covered her face with both her hands. “And my Fritz and his Sophia!” continued he:

“Ah, how will their hearts be troubled when they hear the heavy tidings !”

The duchess gazed on the old man with an expression of surprise.

“Your highness knows not, perhaps,” continued he, “that it was my children for whom you so kindly interested yourself, and who owe their all to your benevolence; that by them your name is daily invoked with blessings, whilst their little one is already taught to lisp it. Ah, yours will be recalled by thousands yet unborn, when that of the duke will be forgotten !”—“I do now remember,” cried the princess with emotion, “that the kind friend of my Sophia was named Kreutzer, and that he held some place under the duke. Ah, how little did I then think that it was to be my fate one day to owe all the little comfort I enjoy to his benevolence !”—“Would it were in my power to increase that little for your highness !” returned the old man with warmth; “but my will, my gratitude, alas !

is all I have to offer." At this moment Mrs. Kreutzer, with a countenance gloomy and overcast, entered the apartment.—
 "Here," cried she addressing her husband without even noticing the princess, "here have I, for these two hours past, been wandering in every hole and corner of the castle in search of you; and forsooth you have chosen this sweet spot in preference to your own comfortable apartments."

Jaquelina, provoked at her presumption, retired to the farther end of the apartment. "What is the matter, Gunilda?" cried Kreutzer with the utmost composure; "what is it that thus excites your indignation?"—"Oh, it is nothing, I suppose," returned she vexed at his calmness, "what trouble is given to me! To me is left all the trouble of receiving your guests."—"What guests, Gunilda?" demanded Kreutzer hastily—"Why, some of the duke's people."—"The duke's people!" exclaimed he surprised.—"What! who
 3 are

are they?" interrupted the princess with the utmost emotion.—"Yes," returned the angry dame without heeding the duchess, "it is they who are come, and I have left Austin to entertain them whilst I went in search of you, and a weary search I have had. For my part, I verily believe madness is infectious, or you would not be so fond of rambling for hours amidst a parcel of crazy ruins which every moment seem ready to tumble about your ears."

Though Mrs. Kreutzer had often, when alone, vented her spleen in angry murmurings against the princess, yet never till now had she dared in her presence to give it utterance. The latter words, however, had scarcely escaped her lips before a look from her husband awed her into silence, and made her quickly repent her insolence and vulgarity. "Woman," cried he with an authoritative voice, "begone! and presume not again to approach your sovereign till you better know your duty."

Trembling and affrighted at his angry manner, Gunilda flunk away covered with shame, resolving for the future never again to open her lips in the duchess's presence.

Kreutzer, in confusion, was beginning to offer apologies for the presumption of his wife, when Jaquelina, with a smile of ineffable sweetness, assured him that she harboured not the smallest resentment against Mrs. Kreutzer, and imputed her ill-humour to her interference in her family concerns; and, insisting on his attending the duke's people, who might take umbrage at his absence, she withdrew to her apartment.

However small were her hopes that the duke would relent, yet she could not help feeling most extremely anxious to know the purport of this visit. Every moment she sat listening, with a beating heart, to the smallest noise; when at length, to her extreme mortification, she saw them depart, without even having received a message from the duke.

In

In a few minutes after, Kreutzer begged permission to attend her. The heart of the princess now filled with a thousand flattering suggestions; but the sad and troubled countenance of her kind friend quickly put them all to flight.

“The duke’s messengers are gone then, my friend?” cried the princess before he could find words to address her—“Yes, madam; they came but to enquire of your highness’s safety.”—“Ah,” cried she, “had they but seen me, justice might have compelled them to have declared to their lord the little occasion there was for confinement; or perhaps so far have interested them in my behalf, as to awaken the resentments of my people at the cruelty and injustice of my sufferings.”—“Alas, madam!” returned Kreutzer, “those were but the creatures of the duke; they speak but as he directs: most probably they were forbidden the sight of you; nor would my life have been safe had I ventured to have

remonstrated on the cruelty of detaining you in a place so little befitting your birth and dignity."

"I see," cried the princess deeply sighing, "that sentence is already passed against me in his inexorable bosom; that this frightful solitude is to be my doom!" Then clasping her hands with increased emotion, "Oh, my country! my people!" exclaimed she, "shall I then no more see you? Why, why did I forsake thee? But it was compassion to thy sufferings which made me yield myself the sacrifice; and if I have saved thee, whatever ills it may be my fate to suffer, I will bear them without repentance!"

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

DAYS rolled in melancholy succession, and months had passed away without affording one cheering hope that could lessen the bitterness of captivity. To an active mind like Jaquelina's, the loss of liberty alone would have been a continued source of grief; but when accompanied by every rigour that the most inventive malice could suggest, it required a firmness almost beyond humanity to support its sorrows without despair.

The heavy watch-bell had tolled three, when the princess, who, unconscious of the time, had been amusing herself in the oratory, starting with surprise at the lateness of the hour, prepared to withdraw to her apartment. Though a stranger to all superstitious fear, yet having a long range of gloomy apartments to pass, whose forlorn appearance,

and casements rattling with every breeze, was at any time sufficient to have awakened unpleasing ideas, now gave rise to sensations which no effort of reason could combat. However, summoning up her utmost courage, with a beating heart and a step quickening at every accidental noise she ventured through them; and having gained her apartment, without undressing she threw herself upon the bed, and tried to banish the unpleasant images which her fancy had created, by a short repose. But her mind was too much disturbed to permit her this enjoyment; and the clock had again counted the hour, ere forgetfulness had stolen over her aching sense. At length, however, overpowered with fatigue, she had yielded herself to a momentary slumber, when soon she seemed to shake off the drowsy sensation; and a horror unknown to her before pervaded her bosom.—The direst, the gloomiest presages assail her heart, and fill it with terrific images, to which till now she
had

had been a stranger. She had remained a considerable time under the dominion of the most hideous terrors, when she thought she perceived a pale light gleam through each crevice of the folding doors of her apartment. Though almost suffocated with her fears, yet she felt a secret power impede her flight; and, the door opening, the countess of St. Pol appeared, closely followed by the duke. A malignant triumph swelled her countenance, whilst that of the duke displayed a deadly vengeance. In one of his hands he grasped a dagger, and with hurried step was making towards the bed, when his eye seeming to meet hers he paused irresolute, till a contemptuous smile from the countess forced him onward.

A prey to the most frightful apprehensions, Jaquelina beholds her curtains gently undrawn, and the murderous arm of Brabant already uplifted to strike the fatal blow. In vain she essays to plead for mer-

cy : a sensation more terrible than what even fear could excite deprives her of the powers of articulation.

For a moment the duke gazes on her before he gives the murderous stroke. A sentiment of pity seems to arrest his arm, when the inveterate Blanch, with cruel vengeance, snatching the dagger from his more lenient hand, points it to her breast. A cry of horror breaks from the princess, and by the exertion her mind is relieved from a vision so terrific.

In vain she tried to persuade herself it was but a dream. The lively impression it had made on her senses, could not without difficulty be shaken off.—Still she saw the cruel hand of Blanch pointing the direful weapon to her bosom. Starting from her bed she listened with a palpitating heart, in the dreadful apprehension of her fears being realized : but all was still and quiet. Dreading a renewal of such horrors, she arose and walked towards the window—
when

when now a circumstance less dreadful, but sufficiently terrific, again alarmed her—she distinctly perceived something thrown against the casement, which was continued, till, overcome with such a series of alarming circumstances, she sunk half fainting to the floor. Instantly she persuaded herself, that all those horrors which had presented themselves so lately to her mind, were intended as a visionary prelude to some dreadful reality. Perhaps a situation more truly pitiable could not be imagined. Alone—too far removed from the inhabited part of the tower for her cries to be heard—unable by flight to procure any aid without being obliged to pass a long court, which might prove the spot of immediate danger—in an agony scarcely to be described, she committed herself to the protection of Heaven, and waited in breathless apprehension what was to ensue !

But now all again was hushed in silence,
and

and the princess, gathering courage from this calm, tried to tranquillize her agitated spirits. As her terrors abated, reason came to her aid, and pointed the causeless ground she had for apprehensions so terrific—as, should the duke have meditated her death, he would rather have taken advantage of her sleep, than, by giving her an alarm, afford her an opportunity of pursuing measures for her safety. Inspired with confidence by that thought, and feeling a curiosity to discover the cause of her alarm, with a beating heart and timid steps she ventured to approach the window. It was a beautiful night, the moon was in her second quarter, and threw its trembling beams upon the unsettled strand; whilst the impetuous waves, awed by her mild influence, rolled but with gentle motion against the battlements. Now and then a little skiff or sloop appeared in view, left to the heedless ship-boy's care, who scarcely keeps

keeps awake his drowsy sense, but by loud chaunting forth some hapless seaman's mournful plaint.

She had remained for some time musing upon the scene, and wondering at the singularity of the circumstance which had excited her fears, when, to her surprise, she now perceived the shade of a human form slowly glide along the rock. For a moment a sensation of fear impelled her to retire: but reflecting on the security of her situation, she continued at the window observing what should follow. In a few minutes a youth advanced, and placed himself immediately against the rock which fronted her apartments. Fearing she was discovered, the princess drew back, but soon was riveted with wonder to the spot, by hearing sung in a low but tuneful voice a few couplets, which she remembered having composed to an air presented her by Gloucester. The voice also seemed familiar to her, and an idea struck her it was

Edwy's.

Edwy's. Immediately a thousand different emotions rushed to her mind. Hope re-animated her breast, and with a beating heart she unlocked the casement. The youth appeared charmed at this condescension, and tried to make her sensible that he was come for her deliverance: but the princess, doubtful of his purpose, remained in a painful suspense, when the moon, darting its rays immediately upon the youth, discovers him to be Edwy.

Joy and surprise for a moment overpowered her; when Edwy, perceiving he was discovered, threw up a ladder of ropes which he had made, and petitioned her to descend; but the princess hesitated. To commit herself to the protection of a youth like Edwy, was a step which only the most dreadful alternative could authorize: yet when she reflected on the little probability there was that the duke would relent—that, lost to the world, she was doomed to waste away her life in sad imprisonment; whilst

whilst now restoration to her country and freedom were within her reach, which if rejected might not again be offered—she could no longer resist the delightful prospect that presented itself, and without further hesitation descended the ladder.

She found herself soon at the bottom, and saw the enraptured Edwy at her feet. Her emotions nearly overcame her, and she was obliged to lean against the wall for support. The delighted but apprehensive youth entreated her to be gone, and described with affecting earnestness the danger of a moment's delay : but the princess scarcely heard him ; the whole of her attention was directed towards a fresh subject for surprise—she sees a young man approaching her, whom she recognizes to be the husband of Sophia. “ Ah ! can it be possible,” exclaimed she, “ that I see Frederic ? ” “ Yes, lady, it is indeed Frederic, your faithful-
est of servants, who, from the moment that Edwy told him the sad story of your imprisonment,
sonment,

sonment, rested not till he had procured the means of your deliverance. Deign then, madam, to accept of his services, and fly from this hated prison." "Through which way, by what means am I to obtain the freedom you offer?" enquired the princess with precipitation. "A vessel, madam, waits in readiness to conduct you far from the power of your tyrant lord. Delay not then, I conjure you," continued he, seeing her irresolute, "delay not a moment to ensure the safety now within your power. Oh! see you not the morn begins to break? Soon will your sleeping guards shake off their drowsy slumbers, and wake to vigilance.—Oh save me then the dreadful necessity of employing force against a father!"

At an argument so forcible the princess no longer hesitated, and, giving a trembling hand to each of her generous friends, she was conducted to the vessel. A favourable wind quickly bore them distant from the
Tower's

Tower's hideous walls : and now the princess already anticipates the joy, the transports which her return will give her subjects. But the pleasure this thought gives her is damped, as she reflects that she has a mother's sharp reproaches to encounter, who she doubts not has credited every malicious slander that revengeful Blanch has uttered against her. The anguish this thought excited was more than she could support, and she strove to banish it from her mind ; but still it recurred, and embittered every pleasing expectation that liberty could form.

Towards the fifth day of their voyage Kreutzer descried land. Immediately he hastened with the joyful tidings to the princess, who received the intelligence with a sensation of pleasure not unmixed with pain. But now the heavens were darkened by approaching tempests, a stiffer gale rose from the shore, and covered with white foam the agitated sea. The attentive Kreutzer
without

without delay commanded the topails to be struck, whilst the mainsail is let flown. Scarcely had he given the word, before the fearless crew were seen mounting aloft to furl the swelling canvas. Loud roars the main, and forked lightning crosses their dazzled sight. Swelled with the wind, the distant waves begin to roll, and dash with impetuous violence against the vessel's suffering sides; whilst night with quickened speed descends, and lends no friendly star to guide the hopeless seaman.

Cast from her course, wandering in the dark, the labouring ship with sails declined moves but as chance directs the anxious Frederic to steer her. The wind augments, but vain are his efforts to direct the mounted sailor: it mocks his feeble voice, and in its loud blast buries all sound. Soon by its rude breath are split the fluttering sails, which hang but as spoils to swell the conqueror's proud triumph.

Now heavily descends a pitiless shower,
and

and waves on waves mount towering to the skies, till with hostile force united they break tremendously over the deck and hatches. No more the pitchy covering acts repellent, and soon a frightful breach admits the rushing tide of waters.

The affrighted sailors crowd together. Some behold with mute despair the direful scene, whilst others vent their grief in cries of horror. Here and there a few appear undaunted, and vainly try to animate their comrades' sinking hearts, who not less brave, but chained to the world by the tenderest ties, view with agony the barrier which is soon to separate them from all they love. Superior to fear, and repelling every feeling which can interfere with duty, Kreutzer appears firm and collected amidst surrounding horrors. By turns he hands the sail, or steers the giddy ship; but now no longer dares he hope to save her, and boats are precipitated into the roaring sea. Immediately he seeks the princess, and entreats her

her to preserve herself by flight;—when scarce has he quitted the deck, before the impetuous crew, regardless of distinctions, crowd the light bark! In vain their commander, who at this moment arrives with Jaquelina, entreats, exhorts, and points out the danger of their rashness. Forwards they rush, till overcharged at once it sinks into the gaping main.

Their cries, their dying groans pierce the heart of the princess. Till now, in pity to her generous friend, she had concealed under an apparent composure the terrors that assailed her heart: but now no longer could she command herself, and, turning from a scene so agonizing, she sunk insensible into the arms of Kreutzer. In vain he strove to re-assure her—She heard him not—her senses had yielded to such complicated horror.

Another boat with difficulty is hoisted, and to this the now distracted Frederic commits his illustrious charge. How bleeds
his

his gallant heart, as he is compelled to quit the generous few, who till they had secured their commander's safety had refused to leave him ! Willingly to have ensured their safety would he have sacrificed his own. Tears for the first time burst from his eyes, as he beholds them plunged with the sinking ship into the watery abyss !

The princess recovering enquires for Edwy : but, alas ! he appears not among the few that are saved. Foremost in danger, the gallant youth with undiminished courage had distinguished himself in assisting towards the general safety. Now was he seen mounting aloft to reef the fluttering sails ; then, fearless sliding down the crackling mast, he takes the helm and guides the unsteady ship.

He had seen the boat which received the princess filled to what with safety it could carry, and the distressed Kreutzer compelled to exert his authority to prevent greater numbers ; when scorning to hazard a life
he

he esteemed of so much greater importance than his own, he immediately retired, fearful lest friendship or pity might induce his friend to save him at a greater hazard; and climbing a splintered mast he beheld, as he supposed, for the last time, his much-loved friends. The boat moved off—when wrung with agony he descended to the deck. More collected, however, than his companions, who with stupid horror beheld the towering seas ready to overwhelm them, he prepares rafts for their safety: and as he sees the vessel ready to yield to their impending force, he seizes one, and commits himself to the dangers of the merciless deep.

Whilst the princess with tears laments the loss of Edwy, the eyes of Kreutzer are directed towards a groupe of unhappy wretches, who clinging to some scattered planks for a few moments stop the approach of death. Among them he fancies he distinguishes Edwy struggling with the whirling seas.

Now

Now mounted on a tremendous billow, he seems wafted to the skies, when immediately it falls, and, whilst it levels him with the hissing seas, plunges in eternal night his ill-starred comrades. Expert in swimming, for a length of time his strength enabled him to buffet the conflicting elements: but now his strength begins to quit him; every hope vanished, and death spread a hovering mist before his eyes, when, once more, as he prepared to turn them towards Heaven, he perceived at a small distance a boat which he doubted not contained the princess and his friend.

That strong desire of life which, for the wisest purposes, is so deeply implanted in our nature, put now to flight (as he perceived the immediate approach of death) the former generous resolves of Edwy; and gathering courage at a sight so animating, he made a desperate effort to gain the mark. An approaching calm assisted his departing strength, and soon he perceived, with gra-

itude to Heaven, some rope thrown from the boat towards him. Immediately he seized it, and fastened it round his body; and scarcely had he finished, when, spent with the exertion, exhausted with fatigue, and unable longer to contend with the warring deep, he was borne along senseless by the impetuous waves.

Kreutzer saw the impending danger of the youth, and, in spite of danger, ordered the rowers to make towards him. In a few moments they approach near enough, without hazard, to drag the almost lifeless youth towards them, and now they have the satisfaction of seeing him hoisted into the vessel. But, alas! his eyes seem closed in death. His blooming visage is changed to a pallid hue; his drooping head declines on his breast, whilst from his mouth and nostrils the salt water gushes in torrents.

Short convulsive sobs at length evinced returning life, and his blood, though feebly,
began

began again to flow; and in the course of a few hours, from the unremitted attentions of the princess and Frederic, he was restored to sense. Ah then, how beats his heart with gratitude! But, forbidden to express it by words, he kisses and bathes with impassioned tears the hands of his succouring friends.

The tempest now blown over, the heavens again are clear, whilst the winds, hushed in silence, scarcely move a wave that ruffles the smooth expanse. Hope animates the drooping spirits of the escaped, and the heart of each is lifted with gratitude towards heaven, as they perceive a vessel nearly approaching. In a short time she was up with them; when Kreutzer making known their distressed situation, the commander, with an alacrity that did honour to his humanity, immediately received them on board. The princess, without making known her rank, was quickly accommodated with every conveniency that her sex

and situation required. Scarcely however had those lively sensations subsided which deliverance from dangers so terrific had inspired, when, as if fated never to know joy, she learnt, with equal grief and amazement, that the ship in which she had taken refuge was bound for England!

Immediately the indelicacy of flying from a husband, and seeking an asylum in the very country where the man on whose account she had suffered is an inhabitant, rushed to her mind! that now she would afford a sanction to all the malicious slanders invented against her by Blanch! Whilst pleasure therefore dances in the eyes of Edwy, the princess's are suffused with the bitterest tears.

With transport she would have accepted imprisonment, or even death, to have avoided the mortifying prospect which now presented itself: but she had no alternative to save her; and, worn out with fatigue, harassed also perpetually by suggestions the

most tormenting, a fever of the most dangerous kind proved the consequence. Youth, however, and an excellent constitution, triumphed over her disorder; yet with it fled not those keen, those afflicting ideas from which it had proceeded; these remained with equal force, and agonized her heart.

The wind proving fair during the chief part of their voyage, they soon reached the destined coast; and Jaquelina, in spite of all her numerous objections, found herself in England. Compelled by the necessity of her affairs to throw herself upon the protection of its monarch, and gathering courage from remembering that in its queen she had a sister, conducted by Kreutzer she presented herself at court.

CHAP. VIII.

THE reception she met with has already been related; when the day following, agreeably to her promise, the princess disclosed to the sympathising Catharine, in nearly the same words as have here been given, the history of her misfortunes. Having heard her with the tenderest commiseration, that amiable princess, embracing her, promised to use her utmost influence with the king to espouse her cause, and if possible to procure an entire deliverance from the jealous and vindictive Brabant.

The generous interest the lovely queen took in her concerns, sensibly affected the grateful heart of our heroine, who, for a long time a stranger to the delights of commiserating friendship, now doubly felt the enjoyment of such a blessing.

For

For some reasons, which history remains silent on, Jaquelina in the recital of her adventures confessed not to her friend the nature of those sentiments she had suffered herself to conceive for Gloucester; and Catharine, whatever indignation she conceived at the crimes of Brabant, could not but severely condemn the imprudent conduct of that prince.

Unconscious of the wounds she inflicted, she inveighed against it with all that warmth which her feelings inspired; whilst the poor suffering Jaquelina, with downcast looks, heard her in blushing silence, and, as soon as civility would permit her, changed the mortifying subject.

Equally impelled by motives of compassion as from a desire to oblige his lovely consort, Henry now became the avowed protector of the beauteous and unfortunate duchess, and joined his persuasions to those of the queen to induce her to make their court her asylum, till, her minority elaps-

ing, he could with justice place her on the throne of her father. But the extreme delicacy of her situation with respect to Gloucester, was, to the mind of Jaquelina, an obstacle to her acceptance of this generous proposal, that no prospect, however advantageous, could make her surmount; and she with firmness adhered to her first resolution of throwing herself upon the protection of her people, and trusting to their love for the consequences. Alarmed for her safety, that monarch pointed out, in the strongest terms, the dangers to which she would expose herself by so rash a proceeding. He recalled to her remembrance the severities which she had experienced from that mother to whose dominion she was going to subject herself; whilst the influence which she had artfully gained over the minds of the people would prevent their interposition, whatever cruelties she might inflict.

However terrifying these arguments were,
yet

yet the princess, listening alone to what propriety dictated, resisted them; till Henry suggesting the probability of the duchess's delivering her up to the power of Brabant—at an idea so hideous all her scruples vanished, and she consented to be alone determined by his advice.

Kreutzer, finding the princess had accepted the protection of the English monarch, grew impatient to return to that country which contained his Sophia; when Jaquelina, enjoying now, through the munificence of Henry, the powers of rewarding those to whom she was so highly indebted, after having forced on him more than his generous heart could with willingness permit him to receive, she suffered him to depart.

Though the princess was unable to behold with indifference a man who, from the first hour of her meeting, had so forcibly engaged her affections, yet she shunned, with admirable perseverance, every

opportunity of being alone with him; and Gloucester, however mortified he felt himself at a conduct which, although his reason might, his love could not approve, fearing to excite her displeasure, dared not utter a reproach. How was his rage kindled against Brabant, as from the queen he learnt her sufferings! and how severely did he reproach himself for that imprudence which had occasioned them!

From the first moment of the princess's arrival he had pleased himself with the hope of obtaining, through the medium of his brother, a dispensation from the Pope of her marriage with Brabant.

As this idea (so flattering to his love) presented itself, his heart bounded with the most flattering presages, and he gave himself up to all those ecstatic sensations which the expectation of an event so long desired, yet so unhopèd-for, could excite, when the image of lady Eleanor, lost, abandoned, the pale victim of despair, rushed to his mind,

mind, and, like a dark cloud which obscures a beauteous sun, overcasts in gloom all his blissful prospects !

Catharine, charmed with the society of her lovely sister, would seldom suffer her to be long absent from her ; and, as she was generally attended by the dukes of Bedford and Gloucester, Jaquelina was continually compelled to be in the company of a man whom prudence pointed out the necessity of avoiding.

It may easily be imagined that Gloucester, availing himself of opportunities so favourable, tried, by every attention, to make her sensible how dear she was still to his heart : but however secretly the princess was charmed at the continuance of an affection on which she felt the happiness of her life depended, yet reason and duty equally opposed her appearing gratified by a conduct so inimical to both. Whilst therefore to Bedford she behaved with all that ingenuous candour so natural to her charac-

ter, towards Gloucester she preserved a degree of coldness which wounded him to the soul.

In spite of the high confidence which the prince entertained for his brother, at a preference so mortifying to his love the fierce pangs of jealousy infested his bosom. He saw not the noble motives which actuated the princess, and, conscious of his own inferiority, he beheld him, equally favoured by nature and fortune, about to supplant him in his dearest hopes.

Perhaps a more accomplished prince than Bedford, England never had witnessed; equally in him were united the different qualities of a statesman and soldier. In his person he was tall, majestic, and finely shaped, with an aquiline visage, and an eye that pierced into the very inmost recesses of the soul. From his reproofing glance the guilty shrunk abashed; whilst his smile, in which sentiment, dignity, and all the softnesses of humanity, were expressed, conveyed

veyed to the mind an idea, that *ſo* would angels ſmile. Though equally faultleſs in mind as in perſon, yet his ſuperiority raiſed him not in his own eſtimation; and he beheld with lenience thoſe faults in others which, in himſelf, he never would have pardoned. Courteous, affable, and of a free deportment and inſinuating addreſs, he had the art of commanding the love of the people, without ſeeming to ſolicit popularity; whiſt his manners carried that attractive quality which inſtantly ſecured confidence and eſteem.

However in the field victory followed his ſteps; it was not the love of glory that was the predominant paſſion of this wiſe prince; though there was not a ſoldier in the army who fought under him who did not ſerve from ſentiment, and fight for reputation, or who would have ſcrupled devoting their lives to promote his glory. No; as a good father he viewed his army, and, alive to the ſofter feelings of humanity,

nity, his heart bled when forced to sacrifice them to the necessities of the times.

But his qualities as a foldier interfered not with his abilities as a statesman. In council, his arguments, brief, clear, and decisive, carried instant conviction to the soul; and whilst the old senators regarded him with delight, the young ones listened to him with approving silence.

Though Gloucester equalled his brother in valour and capacity, he fell short of him in temper and moderation: and it was this circumstance that from infancy had given Bedford an ascendancy over his mind.

It may easily be conceived the bitter mortification that possessed the heart of lady Eleanor at not only finding herself neglected by the man she doted on almost to a degree of distraction, but at seeing all those attentions paid to another which once alone had been paid to her: that, when in company with the fair foreigner, so entranced was his whole sense, that he scarcely seemed to re-
member

member there were any other objects in the creation to whom a thought was due.

On the night of the princess's arrival, a night which had rendered to the keen eye of jealousy but too obvious the cause of the duke's long estrangement, overwhelmed with mortification, and with a heart bursting with rage and resentment, she retired to her home, where, too much agitated for rest, she threw herself in a chair, and gave herself up to all the misery of thought.

Her attentive waiting-woman soon perceived something extraordinary had disturbed her lady, and, for some time, presumed not to interrupt that deep train of reflection which she appeared absorbed in, till, weary at length of a silence so tedious, she took courage, and ventured to enquire if her ladyship was indisposed.

To this enquiry the lady deigned not an answer; but the damsel was not to be discouraged—"The ladies Maud and Mabel, I hear," continued she, "looked particularly

larly frightful to-night, and the young duchess of St. Alban's, whom all the world makes such a rout about, was scarcely regarded."—"Ah!" thought Eleanor, "no wonder she was neglected when the princess of Hainault was present!"—"But pray, my lady," enquired the waiting-woman, "who is this same foreign duchess whose beauty is in every one's mouth, and who, they say, eclipsed all the ladies at court?"—"Pshaw," cried she with angry impatience, "torment me not with thy impertinent enquiries—Be silent, or quit the room."—Edith found her curiosity had led her into an error, which she no sooner discovered than she with haste endeavoured to retrieve. "Well, for my part," continued she, "I perfectly agree with the marquis of Buckingham, who swears your ladyship was the handsomest of all the ladies present!"

Eleanor arose and turned towards the glass; but, alas! truth there told a tale, which but added to her ichagrin. Passion
had

had inflamed each lovely feature, and given to her whole visage that heightened glow so unfavourable to female beauty. Tormenting! What a contrast did it form to a mild, pale, yet beautiful countenance, which arose to her imagination! Her eyes too! How often had she been told that their colour and brightness could not be equalled! But now, swelled and fiery, were they to be compared to a pair of dark blue ones, whose soft expressive languor had that night so interested the heart of every beholder? Mortified beyond expression, she hastily tore from her shining tresses those ornaments which had served but to render her humiliation the more complete, as divested of all such advantages the lovely Jaquelina had attracted the regards of Gloucester.

“And so, my lady,” said Edith as with care she deposited those precious gems which Eleanor threw disdainfully from her, “Edwy Seymour is returned!”—“Edwy Seymour

Seymour returned, said you, Edith !” exclaimed Eleanor astonished.—“ Yes, my lady, he came with the countess of Hainault—that is what I think they call her.”

The truth now, in all its hateful colours, flashed to the mind of Eleanor ; she remembered the long absence of that youth—the evasive answers the duke had given her respecting him ; and no longer could she doubt but that Gloucester had presented him to the princess.—“ Had you any conversation with Edwy ?” demanded she with a faltering voice ; “ questioned you him of his lady ?”—“ Ah, madam ! he is grown such a fine, noble-looking young gentleman, that somehow or other I felt I could not make so free with him as when he used to bring your ladyship letters from the duke his lord.” Eleanor sighed, and covered her face with the hand on which she rested her cheek ; then, dismissing her woman, she desired that Edwy might attend her on the morrow.

Agree-

Agreeable to her commands, on the following day the youth presented himself before her. Lady Eleanor had previously prepared herself for this interview, and had banished from her countenance all traces of that sorrow which the night before had filled her heart. Notwithstanding Edith had taught her to expect a considerable alteration in the person of Edwy, she was astonished to find what a change four years had made—that the little saucy page was now an elegant youth, with highly polished manners!

“How glad I am to see you, Edwy!” cried the lady graciously extending her hand—“Why, you are so grown, so improved in your person, that I can scarcely recollect in you the little Edwy who used to—” Here some painful recollections stopped her proceeding; when presently recovering herself, and assuming a cheerfulness foreign to her heart—“Upon my word,” continued she, “the young ladies must be careful of
their

their hearts, for no doubt some fair foreigner is already in possession of yours."

Edwy blushed and bowed, but denied the charge. "Come, sit down, sir," said Eleanor with a condescending smile, and tell me all your adventures. I have a thousand questions to ask of you."—Edwy, after some entreaty, seated himself.—"Now tell me, in whose service are you at present?"—"In that of the duchess of Brabant, madam!"—"What, Gloucester then has presented you to her?"—"Yes, madam, I once served her highness in quality of page; and now, from some trifling services I have rendered her, she honours me with the name of friend."—"Well, and what kind of lady is this princess of Hainault? A strange report prevails about her!"—"Were truth, madam, to be its author," replied the youth with warmth, "it would speak of her as being all that is great and good!"—"The princess is much beholden for this ready zeal in her defence," cried Eleanor

Eleanor smiling rather disdainfully: "but I meant not to reflect; my words implied no more than that the duke your lord greatly admired this lady. Of this it were senseless to suppose you ignorant."—"My lord, madam, never honoured me with his confidence; yet if he had, young as I am, never would I have betrayed him!"—"Oh! you are grown secret, sir, I find; but you must, from observation, have been acquainted with the motives which could so long have detained the duke in Hainault? Nay, be not thus scrupulous of speaking of an attachment—a regard—call it what you will, to which the world is no stranger!"—"I pry not, madam, into the actions of my superiors, nor do I presume to censure those I honour and revere, to whose bounty I stand so much indebted!"—"O how I admire the discretion of a court page!" exclaimed Eleanor contemptuously.—"Have you any farther commands, madam?"—"None, sir."

The

The youth bowed and withdrew, leaving lady Eleanor in a state of mind to which description cannot do justice. Various passions alternately reigned in her haughty bosom. Now fierce resentment swelled it to almost madness; then a softer sentiment succeeds, and pleads excuses for Gloucester's perfidy; till, absorbed in sorrow at the thought of his lost affections, she dissolves in tears.

The duke of Bedford, ever the friend of the wretched, saw and pitied her distress, and with a generous warmth expostulated with his brother on the cause he had given a lady of her rank, beauty and accomplishments, for complaint. Gloucester, however pained at this reproach, disdained to excuse a conduct of which his heart could not approve, and frankly acknowledged himself to blame; but the confession alone did not satisfy Bedford, who strove to convince him that justice demanded the continuance of a regard which no fault on the part of lady Eleanor had given cause for with-

withdrawing. The silence, the blushes now of the duke, confirmed some suspicions which lately had entered the mind of Bedford, and which in forming had afforded him infinite distress. In vain he exerted all his eloquence in behalf of the fair Eleanor. All he could obtain was a promise from his brother, that, when in public, he would be more observant of his conduct.

END OF VOL. II.